

P O E M S

OF

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

POEMS

BY

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD,

THE FARMER'S BOY.

WITH THIRTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS,

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THE
FARMER'S BOY.



S P R I N G.

*Invocation, etc.—Seed Time.—Harrowing.—Morning Walks.—Milking.—
The Dairy.—Suffolk Cheese.—Spring coming forth.—Sheep fond of
changing.—Lambs at play.—The Butcher, etc.*

O'COME, blest Spirit! whatsoe'er thou art,
 Thou kindling warmth that hover'st round my heart,
 Sweet inmate, hail! thou source of sterling joy,
 That poverty itself cannot destroy,

Be thou my Muse ; and, faithful still to me,
Retrace the paths of wild obscurity.
No deeds of arms my humble lines rehearse ;
No *Alpine* wonders thunder through my verse,
The roaring cataract, the snow-topt hill,
Inspiring awe, till breath itself stands still :
Nature's sublimer scenes ne'er charm'd mine eyes,
Nor Science led me through the boundless skies ;
From meaner objects far my raptures flow ;
O point these raptures ! bid my bosom glow !
And lead my soul to ecstasies of praise
For all the blessings of my infant days !
Bear me through regions where gay Fancy dwells ;
But mould to Truth's fair form what Memory tells.

Live, trifling incidents, and grace my song,
That to the humblest menial belong :
To him whose drudgery unheeded goes,
His joys unreckon'd as his cares or woes.
Though joys and cares in every path are sown,
And youthful minds have feelings of their own,

SPRING.

Quick-springing sorrows, transient as the dew,
Delights from trifles, trifles ever new.

'Twas thus with GILES : meek, fatherless, and poor :

Labour his portion, but he felt no more ;

No stripes, no tyranny his steps pursu'd ;

His life was constant, cheerful servitude :

Strange to the world, he wore a bashful look,

The fields his study, Nature was his book ;

And, as revolving SEASONS chang'd the scene

From heat to cold, tempestuous to serene,

Though every change still varied his employ,

Yet each new duty brought its share of joy.

Where noble GRAFTON spreads his rich domains,

Round *Euston's* water'd vale, and sloping plains,

Where woods and groves in solemn grandeur rise,

Where the kite brooding, unmolested flies ;

The woodcock and the painted pheasant race,

And skulking foxes, destined for the chase ;

There GILES, untaught and unrepining, stray'd

Through every copse, and grove, and winding glade ;

There his first thoughts to Nature's charms inclin'd,
That stamps devotion on th' inquiring mind.
A little farm his generous Master till'd,
Who with peculiar grace his station fill'd ;
By deeds of hospitality endear'd,
Serv'd from affection, for his worth rever'd ;
A happy offspring blest his plenteous board,
His fields were fruitful, and his barns well stor'd,
And fourscore ewes he fed ; a sturdy team ;
And lowing kine that graz'd beside the stream :
Unceasing industry he kept in view ;
And never lack'd a job for GILES to do.

Fled now the sullen murmurs of the North, -
The splendid raiment of the SPRING peeps forth ;
Her universal green, and the clear sky,
Delight still more and more the gazing eye.
Wide o'er the fields, in rising moisture strong,
Shoots up the simple flower, or creeps along
The mellow'd soil ; imbibing fairer hues,
Or sweets from frequent showers and evening dews ;

SPRING.

That summon from their sheds the slumbering plows,
While health impregnates every breeze that blows.
No wheels support the diving, pointed share ;
No groaning ox is doom'd to labour there ;
No helpmates teach the docile steed his road ;
(Alike unknown the plowboy and the goad ;)
But, unassisted through each toilsome day,
With smiling brow the plowman cleaves his way,
Draws his fresh parallels, and, widening still,
Treads slow the heavy dale, or climbs the hill :
Strong on the wing his busy followers play,
Where writhing earth-worms meet th' unwelcome day ;
Till all is chang'd, and hill and level down
Assume a livery of sober brown ;
Again disturb'd, when GILES with wearying strides
From ridge to ridge the ponderous harrow guides :
His heels deep sinking every step he goes,
Till dirt adhesive loads his clouted shoes.
Welcome green headland ! firm beneath his feet ;
Welcome the friendly bank's refreshing seat !

There, warm with toil, his panting horses browse,
Their shelt'ring canopy of pendent boughs ;
Till rest, delicious, chase each transient pain,
And new-born vigour swell in every vein.
Hour after hour, and day to day succeeds ;
Till every clod and deep-drawn furrow spreads
To crumbling mould ; a level surface clear,
And strew'd with corn to crown the rising year ;
And o'er the whole GILES once transverse again,
In earth's moist bosom buries up the grain.
The work is done ; no more to man is given ;
The grateful Farmer trusts the rest to Heaven.
Yet oft with anxious heart he looks around,
And marks the first green blade that breaks the grou
In fancy sees his trembling oats uprun,
His tufted barley yellow with the sun ;
Sees clouds propitious shed their timely store,
And all his harvest gather'd round his door.
But still unsafe the big swoln grain below,
A fav'rite morsel with the Rook and Crow ;

SPRING.

From field to field the flock increasing goes ;
To level crops most formidable foes :
Their danger well the wary plunderers know,
And place a watch on some conspicuous bough ;
Yet oft the skulking gunner by surprise
Will scatter death amongst them as they rise.
These, hung in triumph round the spacious field,
At best will but a short-liv'd terror yield :
Nor guards of property: (not penal law,
But harmless riflemen of rags and straw ;)
Familiariz'd to these, they boldly rove,
Nor heed such sentinels that never move.
Let then your birds lie prostrate on the earth,
In dying posture, and with wings stretch'd forth ;
Shift them at eve or morn from place to place,
And death shall terrify the pilfering race ;
In the mid air, while circling round and round,
They call their lifeless comrades from the ground ;
With quick'ning wing, and notes of loud alarm,
Warn the whole flock to shun th' impending harm.

This task had GILES, in fields remote from home :
Oft has he wish'd the rosy morn to come :
Yet never fam'd was he, nor foremost found
To break the seal of sleep ; his sleep was sound :
But when at day-break summon'd from his bed,
Light as the lark that carol'd o'er his head.—
His sandy way deep-worn by hasty showers,
O'er-arch'd with oaks that form'd fantastic bow'rs,
Waving aloft their tow'ring branches proud,
In borrow'd tinges from the eastern cloud,
Gave inspiration, pure as ever flow'd,
And genuine transport in his bosom glow'd.
His own shrill matin join'd the various notes
Of Nature's music, from a thousand throats :
The Blackbird strove with emulation sweet,
And Echo answer'd from her close retreat ;
The sporting White-throat on some twig's end borne,
Pour'd hymns to freedom and the rising morn ;
Stopt in her song perchance the starting Thrush
Shook a white shower from the black-thorn bush,

SPRING.

Where dew-drops thick as early blossoms hung,
And trembled as the minstrel sweetly sung.
Across his path, in either grove to hide,
The timid Rabbit scouted by his side;
Or Pheasant boldly stalk'd along the road,
Whose gold and purple tints alternate glow'd.

But groves no farther fenc'd the devious way ;
A wide-extended heath before him lay,
Where on the grass the stagnant shower had run,
And shone a mirror to the rising sun,
Thus doubly seen to light a distant wood,
To give new life to each expanding bud ;
And chase away the dewy foot-marks found,
Where prowling Reynard trod his nightly round ;
To shun whose thefts 'twas GILES's evening care,
His feather'd victims to suspend in air,
High on the bough that nodded o'er his head,
And thus each morn'g to strew the field with dead.

His simple errand done, he homeward hies ;
Another instantly its place supplies.

The clatt'ring Dairy-Maid immers'd in steam,
Singing and scrubbing midst her milk and cream,
Bawls out, "*Go fetch the Cows!*"—he hea's no more ;
For pigs, and ducks, and turkeys, throng the door,
And sitting hens, for constant war prepar'd ;
A concert 'strange to that which late he heard.
Straight to the meadow then he whistling goes ;
With well-known halloo calls his lazy Cows :
Down the rich pasture heedlessly they graze,
'Or hear the summon with an idle gaze ;
For well they know the cow-yard yields no more
Its tempting fragrance, nor its wintry store.
Reluctance marks their steps, sedate and slow ;
The right of conquest all the law they know ;
The strong press on, the weak by turns succeed,
And one superior always takes the lead ;
Is ever foremost, wheresoe'er they stray ;
Allow'd precedence, undisputed sway ;
With jealous pride her station is maintain'd,
For many a broil that post of honour gain'd.

At home, the yard affords a grateful scene ;
For Spring makes e'en a miry cow-yard clean.
Thence from its chalky bed behold convey'd
The rich manure that drenching Winter made,
Which pil'd near home, grows green with many a weed,
A promis'd nutriment for Autumn's seed.
Forth comes the Maid, and like the morning smiles ;
The Mistress too, and follow'd close by GILES.
A friendly tripod forms their humble seat,
With pails bright scour'd, and delicately sweet.
Where shadowing elms obstruct the morning ray,
Begins the work, begins the simple lay ;
The full-charg'd udder yields its willing streams,
While MARY sings some lover's amorous dreams ;
And crouching GILES beneath a neighbouring tree
'Tugs o'er his pail, and chants with equal glee ;
Whose hat with tatter'd brim, of nap so bare,
From the cow's side purloins a coat of hair,
A mottled ensign of his harmless trade,
An unambitious, peaceable cockade.

As unambitious too that cheerful aid
The Mistress yields beside her rosy Maid ;
With joy she views her plenteous reeking store,
And bears a brimmer to the dairy-door ;
Her cows dismiss'd, the luscious mead to roam,
Till eve again recall them loaded home.
And now the DAIRY claims her choicest care,
And half her household find employment there :
Slow rolls the churn, its load of clogging cream
At once foregoes its quality and name :
From knotty particles first floating wide
Congealing butter's dash'd from side to side ;
Streams of new milk through flowing coolers stray,
And snow-white curd abounds, and wholesome whey :
Due north th' unglazed windows, cold and clear,
For warming sunbeams are unwelcome here.
Brisk goes the work beneath each busy hand,
And GILES must trudge, whoever gives command ;
A *Gibeonite*, that serves them all by turns :
He drains the pump, from him the faggot burns ;

From him the noisy Hogs demand their food ;
While at his heels run many a chirping brood,
Or down his path, in expectation stand,
With equal claims upon his strewing hand.
Thus wastes the morn, till each with pleasure sees
The bustle o'er, and press'd the new-made cheese.

Unrivall'd stands thy country *Cheese*, O GILES !
Whose very name alone engenders smiles ;
Whose fame abroad by every tongue is spoke,
The well-known butt of many a flinty joke,
That pass like current coin the nation through ;
And, ah ! experience proves the satire true.
Provision's grave, thou ever craving mart,
Dependent, huge Metropolis ! where Art
Her poring thousands stows in breathless rooms,
Midst pois'nous smokes, and steams, and rattling looms :
Where Grandeur revels in unbounded stores ;
Restraint a slighted stranger at their doors !
Thou, like a whirlpool, drain'st the countries round,
Till London market, London price, resound

Through every town, round every passing load,
And dairy produce throngs the eastern road :
Delicious veal and butter, every hour,
From Essex lowlands, and the banks of Stour ;
And further far, where numerous herds repose,
From Orwell's brink, from Waveny, or Ouse.
Hence Suffolk dairy-wives run mad for cream,
And leave their milk with nothing but its name ;
Its name derision and reproach pursue,
And strangers tell of " three times skimm'd sky-blue."
To cheese converted, what can be its boast ?
What, but the common virtues of a post !
If drought o'ertake it faster than the knife,
Most fair it bids for stubborn length of life,
And, like the oaken shelf whereon 'tis laid,
Mocks the weak efforts of the bending blade ;
Or in the hog-trough rests in perfect spite,
Too big to swallow, and too hard to bite.
Inglorious victory ! Ye Cheshire meads,
Or Severn's flow'ry dales, where Plenty treads,

Was your rich milk to suffer wrongs like these,
Farewell your pride ! farewell renowned cheese !
The skimmer dread, whose ravages alone
Thus turn the meads' sweet nectar into stone.
• NEGLECTED now the early *daisy* lies ;
Nor thou, pale *primrose*, bloom'st the only prize.
Advancing SPRING profusely spreads abroad
Flow'rs of all hues, with sweetest fragrance stor'd ;
Where'er she treads LOVE giaddens every plain,
• *Delight* on tiptoe bears her lucid train ;
Sweet *Hope* with conscious brow before her flies,
Anticipating wealth from Summer skies ;
All Nature feels her renovating sway ;
The sheep-fed pasture, and the meadow gay ;
And trees and shrubs, no longer budding seen,
• Display the new-grown branch of lighter green ;
On airy downs the idling shepherd lies,
And sees *to-morrow* in the marbled skies.
Here then, my soul, thy darling theme pursue,
For every day was GILES a SHEPHERD too.

Small was his change : no wilds had they to roam ;
But bright enclosures circling round their home.
No yellow-blossom'd furze, nor stubborn thorn,
The heath's rough produce, had their fleeces torn ;
Yet, ever roving, ever seeking thee,
Enchanting spirit, dear Variety !
O happy tenants, prisoners of a day !
Releas'd to ease, to pleasure, and to play ;
Indulg'd through every field by turns to range,
And taste them all in one continual change.
For though luxuriant their grassy food,
Sheep long confin'd but loathe the present good :
Bleating around the homeward gate they meet,
And starve, and pine, with plenty at their feet.
Loos'd from the winding lane, a joyful throng,
See, o'er yon pasture, how they pour along !
GILES round his boundaries takes his usual stroll ;
Sees every pass secur'd, and fences whole ;
High fences, proud to charm the gazing eye,
Where many a nestling first essays to fly ;

Where blows the woodbine, faintly streak'd with red,
 And rests on every bough its tender head ;
 Round the young ash its twining branches meet,
 Or crown the hawthorn with its odour sweet.

* Say, ye that know, ye who have felt and seen,
 SPRING's morning smiles, and soul-enliv'ning green,
 Say, did you give the thrilling transport way ?
 Did your eye brighten, when young Lambs at play
 Leap'd o'er your path with animated pride,
 Or gaz'd in merry clusters by your side ?
 Ye who can smile, to wisdom no disgrace,
 At the arch meaning of a Kitten's face :
 If spotless innocence, and infant mirth,
 Excites to praise, or gives reflection birth ;
 In shades like these pursue your fav'rite joy,
 * Midst Nature's revels, sports that never cloy.

A few begin a short but vigorous race,
 And Indolence abash'd soon flies the place ;
 Thus challeng'd forth, see thither one by one,
 From every side, assembling, playmates run ;

A thousand wily antics mark their stay,
A starting crowd, impatient of delay.
Like the fond dove, from fearful prison freed,
Each seems to say, "Come, let us try our speed!"
Away they scour, impetuous, ardent, strong,
The green turf trembling as they bound along;
Adown the slope, then up the hillock climb,
Where every molehill is a bed of thyme;
There panting stop; yet scarcely can refrain;
A bird, a leaf, will set them off again;
Or, if a gale with strength unusual blow,
Scatt'ring the wild-briar roses into snow,
Their little limbs increasing efforts try,
Like the torn flow'r the fair assemblage fly.
Ah, fallen rose! sad emblem of their doom;
Frail as thyself, they perish as they bloom!
Though unoffending Innocence may plead,
Though frantic Ewes may mourn the savage deed,
Their shepherd comes, a messenger of blood,
And drives them bleating from their sports and food.

Care loads his brow, and pity wrings his heart,
For lo ! the murd'ring BUTCHER, with his cart,
Demands the firstlings of his flock to die,
And makes a sport of life and liberty !
His gay companions GILES beholds no more ;
Clos'd are their eyes, their fleeces drench'd in gore ;
Nor can Compassion, with her softest notes,
Withhold the knife that plunges through their throats.
Down, indignation ! hence, ideas foul !
Away the shocking image from my soul !
Let kindlier visitants attend my way,
Beneath approaching SUMMER's fervid ray ;
Nor thankless glooms obtrude, nor cares annoy,
Whilst the sweet theme is *universal joy*.



S U M M E R.

*Turnip Sowing.—Wheat Ripening.—Sparrows.—Insects.—The Sky-Lark.—
Reaping, etc.—Harvest Field, Dairy Maid, etc.—Labours of the Barn.—
The Gander.—Night; a Thunder Storm.—Harvest-Home.—Reflections
etc.*

THE FARMER'S life displays in every part
A moral lesson, to the sensual heart.
Though in the lap of Plenty, thoughtful still,
He looks beyond the present good or ill ;

Nor estimates alone ^one blessing's worth,
From changeful seasons, or capricious earth,
But views the future with the present hours,
And looks for failures ^eas he looks ^efor showers ;
For casual as for certain want prepares,
And round ^shis yard the reeking haystack rears ;
Or clover, blossom'd lovely to the sight,
His team's rich store through many a wintry night
What though abundance round his dwelling spreads,
'Though ever moist his self-improving meads
Supply his dairy with a copious flood,
And seem to promise unexhausted food ;
That promise fails, when buried deep in snow,
And vegetative juices cease to flow.
For this, his plough turns up the destin'd lands,
Whence stormy WINTER draws its full demands ;
For this, the seed minutely small, he sows,
Whence, sound and sweet, the hardy turnip grows.
But how unlike to April's closing days !
High climbs the Sun, and darts his pow'ful rays ;

Whitens the fresh-drawn mould, and pierces through
The cumb'rous clods that tumble round the plough.
O'er heaven's bright azure hence with joyful eyes
The Farmer sees dark clouds assembling rise ;
Borne o'er his fields a heavy torrent falls,
And strikes the earth in hasty driving squalls.
" *Right welcome down, ye precious drops,*" he cries ;
But soon, too soon, the partial blessing flies.
" *Boy, bring the harrows ! try how deep the rain*
Has forced its way." He comes, but comes in vain ;
Dry dust beneath the bubbling surface lurks,
And mocks the pains the more, the more he works :
Still, midst huge clods, he plunges on forlorn,
That laugh his harrows and the shower to scorn.
E'en thus the living clod, the stubborn fool,
Resists the stormy lectures of the school,
Till tried with gentler means, the dunce to please,
His head imbibes right reason by degrees :
As when from eve till morning's wakeful hour,
Light constant rain evinces secret pow'r,

And ere the day resumes its wonted smiles,
Presents a cheerful, easy task for GILES.
Down with a touch the mellow'd soil is laid,
And yon tall crop next claims his timely aid ;
Thither well pleas'd he hies, assur'd to find
Wild, trackless haunts, and objects to his mind.

Shot up from broad rank blades that droop below,
The nodding WHEAT-EAR forms a graceful bow,
With milky kernels starting full, weigh'd down,
'Ere yet the sun hath ting'd its head with brown ;
There thousands in a flock, for ever gay;
Loud chirping sparrows welcome on the day,
And from the mazes of the leafy thorn
Drop one by one upon the bending corn.
GILES with a pole assails their close retreats,
And round the grass-grown dewy border beats,
On either side completely overspread,
Here branches bend, there corn o'ertops his head.
Green covert, hail ! for through the varying year
No hours so sweet, no scene to him so dear,

Here *Wisdom's* placid eye delighted sees •
His frequent intervals of lonely ease,
And with one ray his infant soul inspires,
Just kindling there her never-dying fires,
Whence solitude derives peculiar charms,
And heaven-directed thought his bosom warms.
Just where the parting bough's light shadows play,
Scarce in the shade, nor in the scorching day,
Stretcht on the turf he lies, a peopled bed,
Where swarming insects creep around his head.
The small dust-colour'd beetle climbs with pain,
O'er the smooth plantain-leaf, a spacious plain !
Thence higher still, by countless steps convey'd, •
He gains the summit of a shiv'ring blade,
And flirts his filmy wings, and looks around,
Exulting in his distance from the ground.
The tender speckled moth here dancing seen,
The vaulting grasshopper of glossy green,
And all prolific SUMMER's sporting train,
Their little lives by various pow'rs sustain.

But what can unassisted vision do ?
What, but recoil where most it would pursue ;
His patient gaze but finish with a sigh,
When Music waking speaks the *sky-lark* nigh !
Just starting from the corn, he cheerly sings,
And trusts with conscious pride his downy wings ;
Still louder breathes, and in the face of day
Mounts up, and calls on GILES to mark his way.
Close to his eyes his hat he instant bends,
And forms a friendly telescope, that lends
Just aid enough to dull the glaring light,
And place the wand'ring bird before his sight,
That oft beneath a light cloud sweeps along,
Lost for a while, yet pours the varied song :
The eye still follows, and the cloud moves by,
Again he stretches up the clear blue sky ;
His form, his motion, undistinguish'd quite,
Save when he wheels direct from shade to light :
E'en then the songster a mere speck became,
Gliding like fancy's bubbles in a dream,

The gazer sees ; but yielding to repose,
 Unwittingly his jaded eyelids close.
 Delicious sleep ! From sleep who could forbear,
 With no more guilt than GILES, and no more care ?
 Peace o'er his slumbers waves her guardian wing,
 Nor Conscience once disturbs him with a sting ;
 He wakes refresh'd from every trivial pain,
 And takes his pole, and brushes round again.

Its dark-green hue, its sicklier tints all fail,
 And ripening Harvest rustles in the gale.
 A glorious sight, if glory dwells below,
 Where Heaven's munificence makes all the show
 O'er every field and golden prospect found,
 That glads the Plowman's Sunday-morning's round,
 When on some eminence he takes his stand,
 To judge the smiling produce of the land.
 Here Vanity slinks back, her head to hide :
 What is there here to flatter human pride ?
 The tow'ring fabric, or the dome's loud roar,
 And steadfast columns, may astonish more,

Where the charm'd *gazer* long delighted stays,
Yet trac'd but to the *architect* the praise ;
Whilst here, the veriest clown that treads the sod,
Without one scruple gives the praise to God ;
And twofold joys possess his raptur'd mind,
From gratitude and admiration join'd.

Here, midst the boldest triumphs of her worth,
NATURE herself invites the REAPERS forth ;
Dares the keen sickle from its twelvemonth's rest,
And gives that ardour which in every breast
From infancy to age alike appears,
When the first sheaf its plummy top uprears.
No rake takes here what Heaven to all bestows—
Children of want, for you the bounty flows !
And every cottage from the plenteous store
Receives a burden nightly at its door.

Hark ! where the sweeping scythe now rips along
Each sturdy Mower, emulous and strong.
Whose writhing form meridian heat defies,
Bends o'er his work, and every sinew tries ;

Prostrates the waving treasure at his feet,
But spares the rising clover, short and sweet.
Come, HEALTH ! come, *Jollity* ! light-footed, come ;
Here hold your revels, and make this your home.
Each heart awaits and hails you as its own ;
Each moisten'd brow, that scorns to wear a frown ;
Th' unpeopled dwelling mourns its tenants stray'd ;
E'en the domestic, laughing, Dairy-Maid
Hies to the FIELD, the general toil to share.
Meanwhile the FARMER quits his elbow-chair,
His cool brick-floor, his pitcher, and his ease,
And braves the sultry beams, and gladly sees
His gates thrown open, and his team abroad,
The ready group attendant on his word,
To turn the swarth, the quiv'ring load to rear,
Or ply the busy rake, the land to clear.
Summer's light garb itself now cumb'rous grown,
Each his thin doublet in the shade throws down ;
Where oft the Mastiff skulks with half-shut eye,
And rouses at the stranger passing by ;

Whilst unrestrain'd the social converse flows,
And every breast Love's powerful impulse knows,
And rival wits with more than rustic grace
Confess the presence of a pretty face.

For, lo ! encircled there, the lovely MAID,
In youth's own bloom and native smiles array'd ;
Her hat awry, divested of her gown,
Her creaking stays of leather, stout and brown ;—
Invidious barrier ! Why art thou so high,
When the slight covering of her neck slips by,
There half revealing to the eager sight,
Her full, ripe bosom, exquisitely white ?
In many a local tale of harmless mirth,
And many a jest of momentary birth,
She bears a part, and as she stops to speak,
Strokes back the ringlets from her glowing cheek.

Now noon gone by, and four declining hours,
The weary limbs relax their boasted powers ;
Thirst rages strong, the fainting spirits fail,
And ask the sov'reign cordial, home-brew'd ale :

Beneath some shelt'ring heap of yellow corn
Rests the hoop'd keg, and friendly cooling horn,
That mocks alike the goblet's brittle frame,
Its costlier potions, and its nobler name.
To MARY first the brimming draught is given,
By toil made welcome as the dews of heaven,
And never lip that press'd its homely edge
Had kinder blessings, or a heartier pledge.

Of wholesome viands here a banquet smiles,
A common cheer for all;—e'en humble GILES,
Who joys his trivial services to yield
Amidst the fragrance of the open field ;
Oft doom'd in suffocating heat to bear
The cobweb'd barn's impure and dusty air ;
To ride in mirky state the panting steed,
Destin'd aloft th' unloaded grain to tread,
Where, in his path as heaps on heaps are thrown,
He rears, and plunges the loose mountain down :
Laborious task ! with what delight, when done,
Both horse and rider greet th' unclouded sun !

Yet by th' unclouded sun are hourly bred
The bold assailants that surround thine head,
Poor patient *Ball* ! and with insulting wing
Roar in thine ears, and dart the piercing sting :
In thy behalf the crest-wav'd boughs avail
More than thy short-clipt remnant of a tail,
A moving mockery, a useless name,
A living proof of cruelty and shame
Shame to the man, whatever fame he bore,
Who took from thee what man can ne'er restore,
Thy weapon of defence, thy chiefest good,
When swarming flies contending suck thy blood.
Nor thine alone the suffering, thine the care,
The fretful *Ewe* bemoans an equal share ;
Tormented into sores, her head she hides,
Or angry sweeps them from her new-shorn sides.
Penn'd in the yard, e'en now at closing day
Unruly *Cows* with mark'd impatience stay,
And vainly striving to escape their foes,
The pail kick down ; a piteous current flows.

Is 't not enough that plagues like these molest ?
Must still another foe annoy their rest ?
He comes, the pest and terror of the yard,
His full-fledg'd progeny's imperious guard ;
The GANDER ;—spiteful, insolent, and bold,
At the colt's footlock takes his daring hold :
There, serpent-like, escapes a dreadful blow ;
And straight attacks a poor defenceless cow :
Each booby Goose th' unworthy strife enjoys,
And hails his prowess with redoubled noise.
Then back he stalks, of self-importance full,
Seizes the shaggy foretop of the Bull,
Till whirl'd aloft he falls : a timely check,
Enough to dislocate his worthless neck !
For lo ! of old, he boasts an honour'd wound ;
Behold that broken wing that trails the ground !
Thus fools and braves kindred pranks pursue ;
As savage quite, and oft as fatal too.
Happy the man that foils an envious elf,
Using the darts of spleen to serve himself.

As when by turns the strolling *Swine* engage
The utmost efforts of the bully's rage,
Whose nibbling warfare on the grunter's side
Is welcome pleasure to his bristly hide ;
Gently he stoops, or stretcht at ease along,
Enjoys the insults of the gabbling throng,
That march exulting round his fallen head,
As human victors trample on their dead.

Still TWILIGHT, welcome ! Rest, how sweet art thou !
Now eve o'erhangs the western cloud's thick brow :
The far-stretcht curtain of retiring light,
With fiery treasures fraught : that on the sight
Flash from its bulging sides, where darkness lours,
In Fancy's eye, a chain of mould'ring tow'rs ;
Or craggy coasts just rising into view,
Mid'st jav'lins dire, and darts of streaming blue.

Anon tir'd labourers bless their shelt'ring home,
When MIDNIGHT, and the frightful TEMPEST come.
The Farmer wakes, and sees, with silent dread,
The angry shafts of Heaven gleam round his bed ;

The bursting cloud reiterated roars,
 Shakes his straw roof, and jars his bolted doors :
 The slow-wing'd storm along the troubled skies
 Spreads its dark course ; the wind begins to rise ;
 And full-leaf'd elms, his dwelling's shade by day,
 With mimic thunder give its fury way :
 Sounds in his chimney-top a doleful peal
 Midst pouring rain, or gusts of rattling hail ;
 With tenfold danger low the tempest bends,
 And quick and strong the sulph'rous flame descends :
 The frighten'd Mastiff from his kennel flies,
 And cringes at the door with piteous cries. —

Where now 's the trifler ? where the child of pride !
 These are the moments when the heart is try'd !
 Nor lives the man, with conscience e'er so clear,
 But feels a solemn, reverential fear ;
 Feels too a joy relieve his aching breast,
 When the spent storm hath howl'd itself to rest.
 Still, welcome beats the long-continued show'r,
 And sleep protracted, comes with double pow'r ;

Calm dreams of bliss bring on the morning sun,
For every barn is fill'd, and HARVEST *done* !

Now, ere sweet SUMMER bids its long adieu,
And winds blow keen where late the blossom grew,
The bustling day and jovial night must come,
The long accustom'd feast of HARVEST-HOME.
No blood-stain'd victory, in story bright,
Can give the philosophic mind delight ;
No triumph please, while rage and death destroy :
Reflection sickens at the monstrous joy.
And where the joy, if rightly understood,
Like cheerful praise for universal good ?
The soul nor check nor doubtful anguish knows,
But free and pure the grateful current flows.

Behold the sound oak table's massy frame
Bestride the kitchen floor ! the careful dame,
And gen'rous host invite their friends around,
For all that clear'd the crop, or till'd the ground,
Are guests by right of custom :—old and young ;
And many a neighbouring yeoman join the throng,

With artizans that lent their dext'rous aid,
When o'er each field the flaming sun-beams play'd.

Yet Plenty reigns, and from her boundless hoard,
Though not one jelly trembles on the board,
Supplies the feast with all that sense can crave ;
With all that made our great forefathers brave, 'Ere the cloy'd palate countless flavours try'd,
And cooks had Nature's judgment set aside.
With thanks to Heaven, and tales of rustic lore,
The mansion echoes when the banquet's o'er ;
A wider circle spreads, and smiles abound,
As quick the frothing horn performs its round ;
Care's mortal foe ; that sprightly joys imparts
To cheer the frame and renovate their hearts.
Here, fresh and brown, the hazel's produce lies
In tempting heaps, and peals of laughter rise,
And crackling Music, with the frequent *Song*,
Unheeded bear the midnight hour along.

Here once a year Distinction low'rs its crest,
The master, servant, and the merry guest,

Are equal all ; and round the happy ring
The reaper's eyes exulting glances fling,
And, warm'd with gratitude, he quits his place,
With sun-burnt hands and ale-enliven'd face,
Refills the jug his honour'd host to tend,
To serve at once the master and the friend ;
Proud thus to meet his smiles, to share his tale,
His nuts, his conversation, and his ale.

Such were the days,—of days long past I sing,
When Pride gave place to mirth without a sting ;
Ere tyrant customs strength sufficient bore
To violate the feelings of the poor ;
To leave them distanc'd in the madd'ning race,
Where'er refinement shows its hated face :
Nor causeless hated ;—'tis the peasant's curse,
That hourly makes his wretched station worse ;
Destroys life's intercourse ; the social plan
That rank to rank cements, as man to man :
Wealth flows around him, Fashion lordly reigns ;
Yet poverty is his, and mental pains.

SUMMER.

Methinks I hear the mourner thus impart
The stifled murmurs of his wounded heart :
‘ Whence comes this change, ungracious, irksome, cold !
‘ Whence the new grandeur that mine eyes behold ?
‘ The widening distance which I daily see,
‘ Has Wealth done this ?—then Wealth’s a foe to me :
‘ Foe to our rights ; that leaves a powerful few
‘ The paths of emulation to pursue :—
‘ For emulation stoops to us no more :
‘ The hope of humble industry is o’er ;
‘ The blameless hope, the cheering sweet presage
‘ Of future comforts for declining age.
‘ Can my sons share from this paternal hand
‘ The profits with the labours of the land ?
‘ No ; though indulgent Heaven its blessing deigns,
‘ Where’s the *small farm* to suit my scanty means ?
‘ Content, the Poet sings, with us resides ;
‘ In lonely cots like mine, the Damsel hides ;
‘ And will he then in raptur’d visions tell
‘ That sweet Content with Want can never dwell ?

‘ *A barley loaf, ’tis true, my table crowns,*
‘ *That, fast diminishing in lusty rounds,*
‘ *Stops Nature’s cravings ; yet her sighs will flow*
‘ *From knowing this,—that once it was not so.*
‘ *Our annual feast, when Earth her plenty yields,*
‘ *When crown’d with boughs the last load quits the field*
‘ *The aspect still of ancient joy puts on ;*
‘ *The aspect only, with the substance gone :*
‘ *The self-same Horn is still at our command,*
‘ *But serves none now but the plebeian hand :*
‘ *For home-brew’d Ale, neglected and debas’d,*
‘ *Is quite discarded from the realms of taste.*
‘ *Where unaffected Freedom charm’d the soul,*
‘ *The separate table and the costly bowl,*
‘ *Cool as the blast that checks the budding SPRING,*
‘ *A mockery of gladness round them fling.*
‘ *For oft the Farmer, ere his heart approves,*
‘ *Yields up the custom which he dearly loves :*
‘ *Refinement forces on him like a tide ;*
‘ *Bold innovations down its current ride,*

SUMMER.

‘ That bear no peace beneath their showy dress,
‘ Nor add one tittle to his happiness.
‘ His guests selected ; rank’s punctilios known ;
‘ What trouble waits upon a casual frown !
‘ Restraint’s foul manacles his pleasures maim ;
‘ Selected guests selected phrases claim :
‘ Nor reigns that joy, when hand in hand they join,
‘ That good old Master felt in shaking mine.
‘ HEAVEN bless his memory ! bless his honour’d name !
‘ (The poor will speak his lasting worthy fame :)
‘ To souls fair-purpos’d strength and guidance give ;
‘ In pity to us still let goodness live :
‘ Let labour have its due ! my cot shall be
‘ From chilling want and guilty murmurs free.
‘ Let labour have its due ; then peace is mine,
‘ And never, never shall my heart repine.’



A U T U M N.

*Acorns.—Hogs in the Wood.—Wheat Sowing.—The Church.—Village
 Girls.—The Mad Girl.—The Bird Boy's Hut.—Disappointment.—
 Reflections, etc.—Easton-Hall.—Fox-Hunting.—Old Trouncer.—Long
 Nights.—A Welcome to Winter.*

AGAIN, the year's *decline* midst storms and floods,
 The thund'ring chase, the yellow fading woods,

Invite my song; that fain would boldly tell
Of upland coverts, and the echoing dell,
By turns resounding loud, at eve and morn
The swineherd's halloo, or the huntsman's horn.

No more the fields with scatter'd grain supply
The restless wandering tenants of the sty;
From oak to oak they run with eager haste,
And wrangling share the first delicious taste
Of fallen ACORNS; yet but thinly found
Till the strong gale has shook them to the ground.
It comes; and roaring woods obedient wave:
Their home well pleas'd the joint adventurers leave:
The trudging Sow leads forth her numerous young,
Playful, and white, and clean, the briars among,
Till briars and thorns increasing fence them round,
Where last year's mould'ring leaves bestrew the
ground,
And o'er their heads, loud lash'd by furious squalls,
Bright from their cups the rattling treasure falls;

Hot, thirsty food ; whence doubly sweet and cool
The welcome margin of some [•]rush-grown pool,
The Wild Duck's lonely haunt, whose jealous eye
Guards every point ; who sits prepar'd to fly,
On the calm bosom of her [•]little lake,
Too closely screen'd for ruffian winds to shake ; [•]
And as the bold intruders press around,
At once she starts, and rises with a bound :
With bristles rais'd the sudden noise they hear,
And ludicrously wild, and wing'd with fear,
The herd decamp with more than swinish speed,
And snorting dash through sedge, and rush, and reed :
Through tangling thickets headlong on they go,
Then stop and listen for their fancied foe ;
The hindmost still the growing panic spreads,
Repeated fright the first alarm succeeds,
Till Folly's wages, wounds and thorns, they reap :
Yet glorying in their fortunate escape,
Their groundless terrors by degrees soon cease,
And Night's dark reign restores their wonted peace.

For now the gale subsides, and from each bough
The roosting Pheasant's short but frequent crow
Invites to rest ; and huddling side by side,
The herd in closest ambush seek to hide ;
Seek some warm slope with shagged moss o'erspread,
Dry'd leaves their copious covering and their bed :
In vain may GILES, through gath'ring glooms that fall
And solemn silence, urge his piercing call :
Whole days and nights they tarry midst their store,
Nor quit the woods till oaks can yield no more.

Beyond Bleak WINTER's rage, beyond the SPRING
That rolling Earth's unvarying course will bring,
Who tills the ground looks on with mental eye,
And sees next SUMMER's sheaves and cloudless sky ;
And even now, whilst Nature's beauty dies,
Deposits SEED, and bids new Harvests rise ;
Seed well prepar'd, and warm'd with glowing lime,
'Gainst earth-bred grubs, and cold, and lapse of time
For searching frosts and various ills invade,
Whilst wintry months depress the springing blade.

The plough moves heavily, and strong the soil,
And clogging harrows with augmented toil
Dive deep : and clinging, mixes with the mould
A fatt'ning treasure from the nightly fold,
And all the cow-yard's highly valu'd store,
That late bestrew'd the blacken'd surface o'er.
No idling hours are here, when Fancy trims
Her dancing taper over outstretcht limbs,
And in her thousand thousand colours drest,
Plays round the grassy couch of noontide rest :
Here GILES for hours of indolence atones
With strong exertion, and with weary bones,
And knows no leisure ; till the distant chime,
Of Sabbath bells he hears at sermon time,
That down the brook sound sweetly in the gale,
Or strike the rising hill, or skim the dale.

Nor his alone the sweets of ease to taste :
Kind rest extends to all :—save one poor beast,
That true to time and pace, is doom'd to plod,
To bring the Pastor to the HOUSE of GOD :

Mean structure ; where no bones of heroes lie !
The rude inelegance of poverty
Reigns here alone : else why that roof of straw ?
Those narrow windows with the frequent flaw ?
O'er whose low cells the dock and mallow spread,
And rampant nettles lift the spiry head,
Whilst from the hollows of the tower on high
The gray-capp'd Daws in saucy legions fly.

Round these lone walls assembling neighbours meet,
And tread departed friends beneath their feet ;
And new-briar'd graves, that prompt the secret sigh,
Show each the spot where he himself must lie.

Midst timely greetings village news goes round,
Of crops late shorn, or crops that deck the ground ;
Experienc'd ploughmen in the circle join ;
While sturdy boys, in feats of strength to shine,
With pride elate, their young associates brave
To jump from hollow-sounding grave to grave ;
Then close consulting, each his talent lends
To plan fresh sports when tedious service ends.

Hither at times, with cheerfulness of soul,
Sweet *village Maids* from neighbouring hamlets stroll,
That like the light heel'd does, o'er lawns that rove,
Look shyly curious ; rip'ning into love ;
For love 's their errand : hence the tints that glow
On either cheek, a heighten'd lustre know :
When, conscious of their charms, e'en Age looks sly,
And rapture beams from Youth's observant eye.

THE PRIDE of such a party, Nature's pride,
Was lovely POLL ;* who innocently try'd,
With hat of airy shape and ribbons gay,
Love to inspire, and stand in Hymen's way :
But, ere her *twentieth* Summer could expand,
Or youth was render'd happy with her hand,
Her mind's serenity, her peace was gone,
Her eye grew languid, and she wept alone :

* The author has since conversed with this unfortunate woman, and finds that her name is not *Mary*, but *Ann Rayner*, of Ixworth Thorp : she is very much recovered, and appears to have a true sense of her past calamity.

Yet causeless seem'd her grief ; for quick restrain'd,
Mirth follow'd loud ; or indignation reign'd :
Whims wild and simple led her from her home,
The heath, the common, or the fields to roam :
Terror and joy alternate rul'd her hours ;
Now blith^e she sung, and gather'd useless flow'rs ;
Now pluck'd a tender twig from every bough,
To whip the hov'ring demons from her brow.
Ill-fated Maid ! thy guiding spark is fled,
And lasting wretchedness awaits thy bed—
Thy bed of straw ! for mark, where even now
O'er their lost child afflicted parents bow ;
Their woe she knows not, but perversely coy,
Inverted customs yield her sullen joy ;
Her midnight meals in secrecy she takes,
Low mutt'ring to the moon, that rising breaks
Thro' night's dark gloom :—oh how much more forlorn
Her night, that knows of no returning morn !—
Slow from the threshold, once her infant seat,
O'er the cold earth she crawls to her retreat ;

Quitting the cot's warm walls, unhous'd to lie,
Or share the swine's impure and narrow sty ;
The damp night-air her shiv'ring limbs assails :
In dreams she moans, and fancied wrongs bewails.
When morning wakes, none earlier rous'd than she,
When pendant drops fall glitt'ring from the tree ;
But nought her rayless melancholy cheers,
Or soothes her breast, or stops her streaming tears.
Her matted locks unornamented flow ;
Clasping her knees, and waving to and fro ;—
Her head bow'd down, her faded cheek to hide ;—
A piteous mourner by the pathway side.
Some tufted molehill through the livelong day
She calls her throne : there weeps her life away :
And oft the gaily-passing stranger stays
His well-tim'd step, and takes a silent gaze,
Till sympathetic drops unbidden start,
And pangs quick-springing muster round his heart ;
And soft he treads with other gazers round,
And fain would catch her sorrow's plaintive sound.

One word alone is all that strikes the ear,
One short, pathetic, simple word,—“*Oh dear !*”
A thousand times repeated to the wind,
That wafts the sigh, but leaves the pang behind !
For ever of the proffer'd parley shy,
She hears th' unwelcome foot advancing nigh ;
Nor quite unconscious of her wretched plight,
Gives one sad look, and hurries out of sight.—

Fair promis'd sunbeams of terrestrial bliss,
Health's gallant hopes,—and are ye sunk to this ?
For in life's road, though thorns abundant grow,
There still are joys poor POLL can never know ;
Joys which the gay companions of her prime
Sip as they drift along the stream of time :
At eve to hear beside their tranquil home
The lifted latch, that speaks the lover come :
That love matur'd, next playful on the knee
To press the velvet lip of infancy ;
To stay the tottering step, the features trace ;—
Inestimable sweets of social peace !

O THOU, who bidd'st the vernal juices rise !
Thou, on whose blasts autumnal foliage flies !
Let peace ne'er leave me, nor my heart grow cold,
Whilst life and sanity are mine to hold.
Shorn of their flow'rs that shed th' untreasur'd seed,
The withering pasture, and the fading mead,
Less tempting grown, diminish more and more,
The dairy's pride ; sweet SUMMER's flowing store.
New cares succeed, and gentle duties press,
Where the fire-side, a school of tenderness,
Revives the languid chirp, and warms the blood
Of cold-nipt weaklings of the latter brood,
That from the shell just bursting into day,
Through yard or pond pursue their vent'rous way.
Far weightier cares and wider scenes expand ;
What devastation marks the new-sown land !
" From hungry woodland foes go, GILES, and guard
The rising wheat : ensure its great reward :
A future sustenance, a SUMMER's pride,
Demand thy vigilance : then be it try'd :

Exert thy voice, and wield thy shotless gun :
Go tarry there from morn till setting sun."

Keen blows the blast, or ceaseless rain descends ;
The half-stript hedge a sorry shelter lends.
O for a HOVEL, e'er so small or low,
Whose roof, repelling winds and early snow,
Might bring home's comforts fresh before his eyes !
No sooner thought, than see the structure rise,
In some sequester'd nook, embank'd around,
Sods for its walls, and straw in burdens bound,
Dried fuel hoarded is his richest store,
And circling smoke obscures his little door :
Whence creeping forth, to duty's call he yields,
And strolls the *Crusoe* of the lonely fields.
On whitethorns tow'ring, and the leafless rose,
A frost-nipt feast in bright vermilion glows ;
Where clust'ring sloes in glossy order rise,
He crops the loaded branch ; a cumbrous prize :
And o'er the flame the sputt'ring fruit he rests,
Placing green sods to seat the coming guests ;

His guests by promise ; playmates young and gay :—
But ah ! *fresh pastimes* lure their steps away !
He sweeps his hearth, and homeward looks in vain,
Till feeling *Disappointment's* cruel pain,
His fairy revels are exchang'd for rage,
His banquet marr'd, grown dull his hermitage.
The field becomes his prison, till on high
Benighted birds to shades and coverts fly.
Midst air, health, daylight, can he prisoner be ?
If fields are prisons, where is Liberty ?
Here still she dwells, and here her votaries stroll ;
But disappointed hope untunes the soul :
Restraints unfelt whilst hours of rapture flow,
When troubles press, to chains and barriers grow.
Look then from trivial up to greater woes ;
From the poor bird-boy with his roasted sloes,
To where the dungeon'd mourner heaves the sigh ;
Where not one cheering sun-beam meets his eye.
Though ineffectual pity thine may be,
No wealth, no pow'r, to set the captive free ;

Though *only* to thy ravish'd *sight* is given
The radiant path that *Howard* trod to heaven ;
Thy slights can make the wretched more forlorn,
And deeper drive affliction's barbed thorn.
Say not, " I'll come and cheer thy gloomy cell
With news of dearest friends ; how good, how well :
I'll be a joyful herald to thine heart ;"
Then fail, and play the worthless trifler's part,
To sip flat pleasures from thy glass's brim,
And waste the precious hour that's due to him.
In mercy spare the base, unmanly blow :
Where can he turn, to whom complain of you ?
Back to past joys in vain his thoughts may stray,
Trace and retrace the beaten, worn-out way,
The rankling injury will pierce his breast,
And curses on thee break his midnight rest.

Bereft of song, and ever cheering green,
The soft endearments of the SUMMER scene,
New harmony pervades the solemn wood,
Dear to the soul, and healthful to the blood :

For bold exertion follows on the sound
 Of distant Sportsmen, and the chiding Hound ;
 First heard from kennel bursting, mad with joy,
 Where smiling EUSTON boasts her good FITZROY,
 Lord of pure alms, and gifts that wide extend ;
 The farmer's patron, and the poor man's friend :
 Whose Mansion glitters with the eastern ray,
 Whose elevated temple points the way,
 O'er slopes and lawns, the park's extensive pride,
 To where the victims of the chase reside,
 Ingulf'd in earth, in conscious safety warm,
 Till lo ! a plot portends their coming harm.

In earliest hours of dark and hooded morn, •
 Ere yet one rosy cloud bespeaks the dawn,
 Whilst far abroad the Fox pursues his prey,
 He's doom'd to risk the perils of the day,
 From his strong-hold block'd out ; perhaps to bleed,
 Or owe his life to fortune or to speed.
 For now the pack, impatient rushing on,
 Range through the darkest coverts one by one ;

Trace every spot ; whilst down each noble glade
That guides the eye beneath a changeful shade,
The loit'ring sportsman feels th' instinctive flame,
And checks his steed to mark the springing game.
Midst intersecting cuts and winding ways
The huntsman cheers his dogs, and anxious strays
Where every narrow riding, even shorn,
Gives back the echo of his mellow horn :
Till fresh and lightsome, every pow'r untried,
The starting fugitive leaps by his side,
His lifted finger to his ear he plies,
And the view-halloo bids a chorus rise
Of Dogs quack-mouth'd, and shouts that mingle loud
As bursting thunder rolls from cloud to cloud.
With ears erect, and chest of vig'rous mould,
O'er ditch, o'er fence, unconquerably bold,
The shining courser lengthens every bound,
And his strong foot-locks suck the moisten'd ground,
As from the confines of the wood they pour,
And joyous villages partake the roar.

O'er heath far-stretch'd, or down, or valley low,
 The stiff-limb'd peasant, glorying in the show,
 Pursues in vain ; where Youth itself soon tires,
 Spite of the transports that the chase inspires ;
 For who unmounted long can charm the eye,
 Or hear the music of the leading cry ?

Poor faithful TROUNCER ! thou canst lead no more ;
 All thy fatigues and all thy triumphs o'er !
 Triumphs of worth, whose long-excelling fame
 Was still to follow true the hunted game !
 Beneath enormous oaks, Britannia's boast,
 In thick, impenetrable coverts lost,
 When the warm pack in falt'ring silence stood,
 Thine was the note that rous'd the list'ning wood,
 Rekindling every joy with tenfold force,
 Through all the mazes of the tainted course.
 Still foremost thou the dashing stream to cross,
 And tempt along the animated horse ;
 Foremost o'er fen or level mead to pass,
 And sweep the show'ring dew-drops from the grass ;

Then bright emerging from the mist below
To climb the woodland hill's exulting brow.

Pride of thy race ! with worth far less than thine,
Full many human leaders daily shine !
Less faith, less constancy, less gen'rous zeal !—
Then no disgrace my humble verse shall feel,
Where not one lying line to riches bows,
Or poison'd sentiments from rancour flows ;
Nor flowers are strewn around Ambition's car :
An honest Dog's a nobler theme by far.
Each sportsman heard the tidings with a sigh,
When Death's cold touch had stopt his tuneful cry ;
And though high deeds, and fair exalted praise,
In memory liv'd, and flow'd in rustic lays,
Short was the strain of monumental woe :

*"Foxes rejoice ! here buried lies your foe."**

In safety hous'd throughout NIGHT's *length'ning* reign,
The Cock sends forth a loud and piercing strain ;

* Inscribed on a stone in Euston park wall.

More frequent, as the glooms of midnight flee,
And hours roll round that brought him liberty,
When SUMMER's early dawn, mild, clear, and bright,
Chas'd quick away the transitory night :—
Hours now in darkness veil'd ; yet loud the scream
Of Geese impatient for the playful stream ;
And all the feather'd tribe imprison'd raise
Their morning notes of inharmonious praise ;
And many a clamorous Hen and cockrel gay,
When daylight slowly through the fog breaks way,
Fly wantonly abroad : but ah, how soon
The shades of twilight follow hazy noon,
Short'ning the busy day !—day that slides by
Amidst th' unfinish'd toils of HUSBANDRY ;
Toils still each morn resum'd with double care
To meet the icy terrors of the year ;
To meet the threats of *Boreas* undismay'd,
And WINTER's gathering frowns and hoary head.

Then welcome, COLD ; welcome, ye *snowy* nights !
Heaven midst your rage shall mingle pure delights,

And confidence of hope the soul sustain,
While devastation sweeps along the plain :
Nor shall the child of poverty despair,
But bless THE POWER that rules the *changing year* ;
Assur'd,—though horrors round his cottage reign,—
That SPRING will come, and Nature smile again.



W I N T E R.

Tenderness to Cattle.—Frozen Turnips.—The Cow-yard.—Night.—The Farm-house.—Fire-side.—Farmer's Advice and Instruction.—Nightly Cures of the Stable.—Dobbin.—The Post-horse.—Sheep-stealing Dogs.—Walks occasioned thereby.—The Ghost.—Lamb Time.—Returning Spring.—Conclusion.

WITH kindred pleasures mov'd, and cares oppress,
Sharing alike our weariness and rest ;

Who lives the daily partner of our hours
Through every change of heat, and frost, and show'rs,
Partakes our cheerful meals, partaking first
In mutual labour and fatigue and thirst ;
The kindly intercourse will ever prove
A bond of amity and social love.
To more than man this generous warmth extends,
And oft the team and shiv'ring herd befriends ;
Tender solicitude the bosom fills,
And Pity executes what Reason wils :
Youth learns compassion's tale from ev'ry tongue,
And flies to aid the helpless and the young.

When now, unsparing as the scourge of war,
Blasts follow blasts, and groves dismantled roar,
Around their home the storm-pinch'd CATTLE lows,
No nourishment in frozen pastures grows ;
Yet frozen pastures every morn resound
With fair abundance thund'ring to the ground.
For though on hoary twigs no buds peep out,
And e'en the hardy brambles cease to sprout,

Beneath dread WINTER's level sheets of snow
The sweet nutritious *Turnip* deigns to grow.
Till now imperious want and wide-spread dearth
Bid Labour claim her treasures from the earth.
On GILES, and such as GILES, the labour falls,
To strew the frequent load where hunger calls.
On driving gales sharp hail indignant flies,
And sleet, more irksome still, assails his eyes ;
Snow clogs his feet ; or if no snow is seen,
The field with all its juicy store to screen,
Deep goes the frost, till every root is found
A rolling mass of ice upon the ground.
No tender ewe can break her nightly fast,
Nor heifer strong begin the cold repast,
Till GILES with pond'rous beetle foremost go,
And scatt'ring splinters fly at every blow ;
When pressing round him, eager for the prize,
From their mixt breath warm exhalations rise.
In beaded rows if drops now deck the spray,
While the sun grants a momentary ray,

Let but a cloud's broad shadow intervene,
And stiffen'd into gems the drops are seen ;
And down the furrow'd oak's broad southern side
Streams of dissolving rime no longer glide.

Though NIGHT approaching bids for rest prepare,
Still the flail echoes through the frosty air,
Nor stops till deepest shades of darkness come,
Sending at length the weary Labourer home.
From him, with bed and nightly food supplied,
Throughout the yard, hous'd round on every side,
Deep-plunging Cows their rustling feast enjoy,
And snatch sweet mouthfuls from the passing Boy,
Who moves 'unseen beneath his trailing load,
Fills the tall racks, and leaves a scatter'd road ;
Where oft the swine from ambush warm and dry
Bolt out, and scamper headlong to their sty,
When GILES with well-known voice, already there,
Deigns them a portion of his evening care.
Him, though the cold may pierce, and storms molest,
Succeeding hours shall cheer with warmth and rest ;

Gladness to spread, and raise the grateful smile,
 He hurls the faggot bursting from the pile,
 And many a log and rifted trunk conveys,
 To heap the fire, and wide extend the blaze,
 That quivering strong through every opening flies,
 Whilst smoky columns unobstructed rise.
 For the rude architect unknown to fame
 (Nor symmetry nor elegance his aim)
 Who spreads his floors of solid oak on high,
 On beams rough-hewn, from age to age that lie,
 Bade his *wide fabric* unimpair'd sustain
 The orchard's store, and cheese, and golden grain ;
 Bade, from its central base, capacious laid,
 The well-wrought chimney rear its lofty head ;
 Where since hath many a savoury ham been stor'd,
 And tempests howl'd, and Christmas gambols roar'd.
 Flat on the *hearth* the glowing embers lie,
 And flames reflected dance in every eye :
 There the long *billet* forced at last to bend,
 While gushing sap froths out at either end,

Throws round its welcome heat;—the ploughman smiles
And oft the joke runs hard on sheepish GILES,
Who sits joint tenant of the corner-stool,
The converse sharing, though in duty's school ;
For now attentively 'tis his to hear
Interrogations from the Master's chair.

‘ Left ye your bleating charge, when day-light fled,
‘ Near where the hay-stack lifts its snowy head ?
‘ Whose fence of bushy furze, so close and warm,
‘ May stop the slanting bullets of the storm.
‘ For, hark ! it blows ; a dark and dismal night :
‘ Heaven guide the traveller's fearful steps aright !
‘ Now from the woods, mistrustful and sharp-ey'd,
‘ The *Fox* in silent darkness seems to glide,
‘ Stealing around us, list'ning as he goes,
‘ If chance the Cock or stamm'ring Capon crows,
‘ Or Goose, or nodding Duck, should darkling cry,
‘ As if appriz'd of lurking danger nigh :
‘ Destruction waits them, GILES, if e'er you fail
‘ To bolt their doors against the driving gale.

‘ Strew’d you (still mindful of th’ unshelter’d head)
‘ Burdens of straw, the cattle’s welcome bed ?
‘ Thine heart should feel, what thou may’st hourly see,
‘ *That duty’s basis is humanity.* •
‘ Of pain’s unsavoury cup though thou may’st taste
‘ (The wrath of Winter from the black north-east),
‘ Thine utmost suff’rings in the coldest day
‘ A period terminates, and joys repay.
‘ Perhaps e’en now, while here those joys we boast,
‘ Full many a bark rides down the neighb’ring coast,
‘ Where the high northern waves tremendous roar,
‘ Drove down by blasts from *Norway’s* icy shore.
‘ The *Sea-boy* there, less fortunate than thou, •
‘ Feels all thy pains in all the gusts that blow ;
‘ His freezing hands now drench’d, now dry, by turns ;
‘ Now lost, now seen, the distant light that burns,
‘ On some tall cliff uprais’d, a flaming guide,
‘ That throws its friendly radiance o’er the tide.
‘ His labours cease not with declining day,
‘ But toils and perils mark his wat’ry way ;

‘ And whilst in peaceful dreams secure *we* lie,
‘ The ruthless whirlwinds rage along the sky,
‘ Round his head whistling ;—and shalt thou repine,
‘ While this protecting roof still shelters thine !’

Mild, as the vernal show’r, his words prevail,
And aid the moral precept of his tale :
His wond’ring hearers learn, and ever keep
These first ideas of the restless deep :
And, as the opening mind a circuit tries,
Present felicities in value rise.
Increasing pleasures every hour they find;
The warmth more precious, and the shelter kind ;
Warmth that long reigning bids the eyelids close,
As through the blood its balmy influence goes,
When the cheer’d heart forgets fatigues and cares,
And drowsiness alone dominion bears.

Sweet then the ploughman’s slumbers, hale and young,
When the last topic dies upon his tongue ;
Sweet then the bliss his transient dreams inspire,
Till chilblains wake him, or the snapping fire :

He starts, and ever thoughtful of his team,
Along the glitt'ring snow a feeble gleam
Shoots from his lantern, as he yawning goes
To add fresh comforts to their night's repose ;
Diffusing fragrance as their food he moves,
And pats the jolly sides of those he loves.
Thus full replenish'd, perfect ease possest,
From night till morn' alternate food and rest,
No rightful cheer withheld, no sleep debarr'd,
Their each day's labour brings its sure reward.
Yet when from plough or lumb'ring cart set free,
They taste awhile the sweets of liberty :
E'en sober *Dobbin* lifts his clumsy heel
And kicks, disdainful of the dirty wheel ;
But soon, his frolic ended, yields again
To trudge the road, and wear the clinking chain.

Short-sighted DOBBIN !—thou canst only see
The trivial hardships that encompass thee :
Thy chains were freedom, and thy toils repose :
Could the poor *post-horse* tell thee all his woes ;

Show thee his bleeding shoulders, and unfold
The dreadful anguish he endures for gold :
Hir'd at each call of business, lust, or rage,
That prompts the traveller on from stage to stage.
Still on *his* strength depends their boasted speed ;
For them his limbs grow weak, his bare ribs bleed ;
And though he groaning quickens at command,
Their extra shilling in the rider's hand
Becomes his bitter scourge,—'tis *he* must feel
The double efforts of the lash and steel ;
Till when, up hill, the destin'd hill he gains,
And trembling under complicated pains,
Prone from his nostrils, darting on the ground,
His breath emitted floats in clouds around :
Drops chase each other down his chest and sides,
And spatter'd mud his native colour hides :
Through his swoln veins the boiling torrent flows,
And every nerve a separate torture knows.
His harness loos'd, he welcomes, eager ey'd,
The pail's full draught that quivers by his side ;

And joys to see the well-known stable door,
As the starv'd mariner the friendly shore.

Ah, well for him if here his sufferings ceas'd,
And ample hours of rest his pains appeas'd !
But rous'd again, and sternly bade to rise,
And shake refreshing slumber from his eyes,
Ere his exhausted spirits can return,
Or through his frame reviving ardour burn,
Come forth he must, though limping, maim'd, and sore ;
He hears the whip ; the chaise is at the door :—
The collar tightens, and again he feels
His half-healed wounds inflam'd ; again the wheels
With tiresome sameness in his ears resound,
O'er blinding dust, or miles of flinty ground.
Thus nightly robb'd, and injur'd day by day,
His piece-meal murd'ers wear his life away.
What say'st thou *Dobbin* ? what though hounds await
With open jaws the moment of thy fate,
No better fate attends *his* public race ;
His life is misery, and his end disgrace.

Then freely bear thy burden to the mill ;
Obey but one short law,—thy driver's will.
Affection to thy memory ever true,
Shall boast of mighty loads that *Dobbin* drew ;
And back to childhood shall the mind with pride
Recount thy gentleness in many a ride
To pond, or field, or Village-fair, when thou
Held'st high thy braided main and comely brow ;
And oft the tale shall rise to homely fame
Upon thy gen'rous spirit and thy name.

Though faithful to a proverb we regard
The midnight Chieftain of the farmer's yard,
Beneath whose guardianship all hearts rejoice,
Woke by the echo of his hollow voice ;
Yet as the Hound may falt'ring quit the pack,
Snuff the foul scent, and hasten yelping back ;
And e'en the docile Pointer know disgrace,
Thwarting the gen'ral instinct of his race ;
E'en so the MASTIFF, or the meaner Cur,
At times will from the path of duty err,

(A pattern of fidelity by day, ,
 By night a *murderer*, lurking for his prey,)
 And round the pastures or the fold will creep,
 And, coward-like, attack the peaceful *Sheep*.
 Alone the wanton mischief he pursues,
 Alone in reeking blood his jaws imbrues ;
 Chasing amain his frighten'd victims round,
 Till death in wild confusion strews the ground ;
 Then wearied out, to kennel sneaks away,
 And licks his guilty paws till break of day.

The deed discover'd, and the news once spread,
 Vengeance hangs o'er the unknown culprit's head :
 And careful *Shepherds* extra hours bestow
 In patient *watchings* for the common foe ;
 A foe most dreaded now, when rest and peace
 Should wait the season of the flock's increase.

In part these nightly terrors to dispel,
 GILES, ere he sleeps, his little flock must tell.
 From the fire-side with many a shrug he hies,
 Glad if the full-orb'd Moon salute his eyes,

And through th' unbroken stillness of the night
Shed on his path her beams of cheering light.
With saunt'ring step he climbs the distant stile,
Whilst all around him wears a placid smile ;
There views the white-rob'd clouds in clusters driven,
And all the glorious pageantry of Heaven.
Low, on the utmost bound'ry of the sight,
The rising vapours catch the silver light ;
Thence Fancy measures, as they parting fly,
Which first will throw its shadow on the eye,
Passing the source of light ; and thence away,
Succeeded quick by brighter still than they.
Far yet above these wafted clouds are seen
(In a remoter sky, still more serene,)
Others, detach'd in ranges through the air,
Spotless as snow, and countless as they 're fair ;
Scatter'd immensely wide from east to west,
The beauteous 'semblance of a *Flock* at rest.
These, to the raptur'd mind, aloud proclaim
Their MIGHTY SHEPHERD's everlasting Name.

Whilst thus the loit'rer's utmost stretch of soul
Climbs the still clouds, or passes those that roll,
And loos'd *Imagination* soaring goes
High o'er his home, and all his little woes,
TIME glides away ; neglected Duty calls ;
At once from plains of light to earth he falls,
And down a narrow lane, well known by day,
With all his speed pursues his sounding way,
In thought still half absorb'd and chill'd with cold ;
When lo ! an object frightful to behold ;
A grisly SPECTRE, cloth'd in silver-gray,
Around whose feet the waving shadows play,
Stands in his path !—He stops, and not a breath
Heaves from his heart, that sinks almost to death.
Loud the Owl halloos o'er his head unseen ;
All else is silent, dismally serene :
Some prompt ejaculation, whisper'd low,
Yet bears him up against the threat'ning foe ;
And thus poor GILES, though half inclined to fly,
Mutters his doubts, and strains his stedfast eye.

‘ ’Tis not my crimes thou com’st here to reprove ;
‘ No murders stain my soul, no perjur’d love ;
‘ If thou’rt indeed what here thou seem’st to be,
‘ Thy dreadful mission cannot reach to me.
‘ By parents taught still to mistrust mine eyes,
‘ Still to approach each object of surprise,
‘ Lest Fancy’s formful vision should deceive
‘ In moon-light paths, or glooms of falling eve,
‘ This then’s the moment when my mind should try
‘ To scan thy motionless deformity ,
‘ But oh, the fearful task ! yet well I know
‘ An aged Ash, with many a spreading bough,
‘ (Beneath whose leaves I’ve found a Summer’s bow’r,
‘ Beneath whose trunk I’ve weather’d many a show’r,)
‘ Stands singly down this solitary way,
‘ But far beyond where now my footsteps stay.
‘ ’Tis true, thus far I’ve come with heedless haste ,
‘ No reck’ning kept, no passing objects trac’d :—
‘ And can I then have reach’d that very tree ?
‘ Or is its reverend form assum’d by thee ?’

The happy thought alleviates his pain :
He creeps another step ; then stops again ;
Till slowly, as his noiseless feet draw near,
Its perfect lineaments at once appear ;
Its crown of shiv'ring ivy whispering peace,
And its white bark that fronts the moon's pale face.
Now, whilst his blood mounts upward, now he knows
The solid gain from that conviction flows ;
And strengthen'd Confidence shall hence fulfil
(With conscious Innocence more valued still)
The dreariest task that winter nights can bring,
By churchyard dark, or grove, or fairy ring ;
Still buoying up the timid mind of youth,
Till loit'ring Reason hoists the scale of Truth.
With these blest guardians GILES his course pursues,
Till numbering his heavy-sided ewes,
Surrounding stillness tranquillize his breast,
And shape the dreams that wait his hours of rest.
As when retreating tempests we behold,
Whose skirts at length the azure sky unfold,

And full of murmurings and mingled wrath,
Slowly unshroud the smiling face of earth,
Bringing the bosom joy : so WINTER flies !—
And see, the source of Life and Light arise !
A height'ning arch o'er southern hills he bends,
Warm on the cheek the slanting beam descends,
And gives the reeking mead a brighter hue,
And draws the modest *primrose* bud to view.
Yet frosts succeed, and winds impetuous rush,
And hail-storms rattle through the budding bush ;
And night-fall'n LAMBS require the shepherd's care,
And teeming EWES that still their burdens bear ;
Beneath whose sides to-morrow's dawn may see
The milk-white strangers bow the trembling knee ;
At whose first birth the powerful instinct's seen
That fills with champions the daisied green :
For EWES that stood aloof with fearful eye,
With stamping foot now Men and Dogs defy,
And obstinately faithful to their young,
Guard their first steps to join the bleating throng.

But casualties and death from damps and cold
Will still attend the well-conducted fold :
Her tender offspring dead, the Dam aloud
Calls, and runs wild amidst th' unconscious crowd :
And orphan'd sucklings raise the piteous cry ;
No wool to warm them, no defenders nigh.
And must her streaming milk then flow in vain ?
Must unregarded innocence complain ?
No ;—ere this strong solicitude subside,
Maternal fondness may be fresh applied,
And the adopted stripling still may find
A parent most assiduously kind.
For this he's doom'd awhile disguis'd to range
(For fraud or force must work the wish'd-for change) ;
For this his predecessor's skin he wears,
Till, cheated into tenderness and cares,
The unsuspecting dam, contented grown,
Cherish and guard the fondlings as her own.
Thus all by turns to fair perfection rise ;
Thus twins are parted to increase their size :

Thus instinct yields as interest points the way,
Till the bright flock, augmenting every day,
On sunny hills and vales of springing flow'rs
With ceaseless clamour greet the vernal hours.

The humbler *Shepherd* here with joy beholds
Th' approv'd economy of crowded folds,
And, in his small contracted round of cares,
Adjusts the practice of each hint he hears ;
For Boys with emulation learn to glow,
And boast their pastures, and their healthful show
Of well-grown Lambs, the glory of the spring ;
And field to field in competition bring.

E'en GILES, for all his cares and watchings past,
And all his contests with the wintry blast,
Claims a full share of that sweet praise bestow'd
By gazing neighbours, when along the road,
Or village green, his curly-coated throng
Suspends the chorus of the Spinner's song ;
When Admiration's unaffected grace
Lisps from the tongue, and beams in ev'ry face :

Delightful moments !—Sunshine, Health, and Joy,
Play round, and cheer the elevated Boy !
‘ *Another* Spring !’ his heart exulting cries ;
‘ *Another* YEAR !’ with promis’d blessings rise !—
‘ ETERNAL POWER ! from whom those blessings flow,
‘ Teach me still more to wonder, more to know :
‘ *Seed-time* and *Harvest* let me see again ;
‘ Wander the *leaf-strewn* wood, the *frozen* plain :
‘ Let the first flower, corn-waving field, plain, tree,
‘ Here round my home, still lift my soul to THEE ;
‘ And let me ever, midst thy bounties, raise
‘ An humble note of thankfulness and praise !’—

APRIL 22, 1798.

R U R A L T A L E S.



RICHARD AND KATE:

OR,

FAIR-DAY.

A SUFFOLK BALLAD.

‘ COME, Goody, stop your humdrum wheel,
‘ Sweep up your orts, and get your hat ;
‘ Old joys reviv’d once more I feel,
‘ ’Tis Fair-day ;—ay, *and more than that.*

' Have you forgot, KATE, prithee say,
 ' How many Seasons here we've tarried ?
 ' 'Tis *Forty* years, this very day,
 ' Since you and I, old Girl, were married !

' Look out ;—the Sun shines warm and bright,
 ' The Stiles are low, the Paths all dry ;
 ' I know you cut your corns last night :
 ' Come ; be as free from care as I.

' For I'm resolv'd once more to see
 ' That place where we so often met ;
 ' Though few have had more cares than w
 ' We've none just now to make us fret.'

KATE scorn'd to damp the generous flame
 That warm'd her aged Partner's breast :
 Yet, ere determination came,
 She thus some trifling doubts express'd :

‘ Night will come on ; when seated snug,
‘ And you’ve perhaps begun some tale,
‘ Can you then leave your dear stone mug ;
‘ Leave all the folks, and all the ale ?’

‘ Ay, KATE, I wool ;—because I know,
‘ Though time has been we both could run,
‘ Such days are gone and over now ;—
‘ I only mean to see the fun.’

She straight slipp’d off the Wall, and Band,
And laid aside her Lucks and Twitches :
And to the Hutch she reach’d her hand,
And gave him out his Sunday Breeches.

His Mattock he behind the door
And Hedging-gloves again replac’d ;
And look’d across the yellow Moor,
And urg’d his tott’ring Spouse to haste.

RICHARD AND KATE.

The day was up, the air serene,
The Firmament without a cloud ;
The Bee humm'd o'er the level green,
Where knots of trembling Cowslips bow'd.

And RICHARD thus, with heart elate,
As past things rush'd across his mind,
Over his shoulder talk'd to KATE,
Who, snug tuckt up, walk'd slow behind.

' When once a giggling Mawther you,
' And I a red-fac'd chubby Boy,
' Sly tricks you play'd me not a few ;
' For mischief was your greatest joy.

' Once, passing by this very Tree,
' A Gotch of Milk I'd been to fill,
' You shoulder'd me ; then laugh'd to see
' Me and my Gotch spin down the Hill.'

‘ ’Tis true,’ she said ; ‘ But here behold,
 ‘ And marvel at the course of Time ;
 ‘ Though you and I are both grown old,
 ‘ This Tree is only in its prime !’

‘ Well, Goody, don’t stand preaching now ;
 ‘ Folks don’t preach Sermons at a FAIR :
 ‘ We’ve rear’d Ten *Boys* and *Girls* you know ;
 ‘ And I’ll be bound they’ll all be there.’

Now friendly nods and smiles had they,
 From many a kind *Fair-going* face :
 And many a pinch KATE gave away,
 While RICHARD kept his usual pace.

At length arriv’d amidst the throng,
Grand-children, bawling hemm’d them round
 And dragg’d them by the skirts along
 Where gingerbread bestrew’d the ground.

And soon the aged couple spy'd
Their lusty *Sons* and *Daughters* dear :—
When RICHARD thus exulting cried,
' Didn't I tell you they'd be here ?'

•

The cordial greetings of the soul
Were visible in every face :
Affection, void of all controul,
Govern'd with a resistless grace.

'Twas good to see the honest strife,
Which should contribute most to please ;
And hear the long-recounted life,
Of infant tricks, and happy days.

But now, as at some nobler places,
Amongst the Leaders 'twas decreed
Time to begin the DICKY RACES ;
More fam'd for laughter than for speed.

RICHARD look'd on with wond'rous glee,
 And prais'd the Lad who chanc'd to win ;
 ' KATE, wa'nt I such a one as he ?
 ' As like him, ay, as pin to pin ?

' Full *Fifty* years are pass'd away
 ' Since I rode this same ground about :
 ' Lord ! I was lively as the day !
 ' I won the High-lows out and out !

' I'm surely growing young again :
 ' I feel myself so kedge and plump.
 ' From head to foot I've not one pain ;
 ' Nay, hang me if I cou'dnt jump.'

Thus spoke the ALE in RICHARD's pate,
 A very little made him mellow ;
 But still he lov'd his faithful KATE,
 Who whisper'd thus, ' My good old fellow,

‘ Remember what you promis’d me :
‘ And see, the Sun is getting low ;
‘ The Children want an hour, ye see,
‘ To talk a bit before we go.’

Like youthful Lover most complying
He turn’d, and chuckt her by the chin ;
Then all across the green grass hieing,
Right merry faces, all akin,

Their farewell quart, beneath a tree
That droop’d its branches from above ;
Awak’d the pure felicity
That waits upon PARENTAL LOVE.

KATE view’d her blooming Daughters round
And Sons who shook her wither’d hand :
Her features spoke what joy she found ;
But utterance had made a stand.

The Children toppled on the green,
And bowl'd their *fairings* down the hill ;
RICHARD with pride beheld the scene,
Nor could he for his life sit still.

•

A Father's uncheck'd feelings gave
A tenderness to all he said ;
' My Boys, how proud am I to have
' My name thus round the country spread !

•

Through all my days I've labour'd hard,
And could of pains and crosses tell ;
' But this is Labour's great reward,
' To meet ye thus, and see ye well.

•

' My good old Partner, when at home,
' Sometimes with wishes mingles tears ;
' Goody,' says I, ' let what wool come,
' We've nothing for them but our pray'rs.

‘ May you be all as old as I,
‘ And see your sons to manhood grow ;
‘ And, many a time before you die,
‘ Be just as pleas’d as I am now.’

Then, (raising still his Mug and voice,)
‘ An Old Man’s weakness don’t despise !
‘ I love you well, my Girls and Boys ;
‘ God bless you all ;’—so said his eyes—

For as he spoke, a big round drop
Fell, bounding on his ample sleeve ;
A witness which he could not stop,
A witness which all hearts believe.

Thou, FILIAL PIETY, wert there ;
And round the ring, benignly bright,
Dwelt in the luscious half-shed tear,
And in the parting word—*Good Night !*

With thankful Hearts and strengthen'd Love,
The poor old PAIR, supremely blest,
Saw the Sun sink behind the grove,
And gain'd once more their lowly rest.



WALTER AND JANE :
OR,
THE POOR BLACKSMITH.

A COUNTRY TALE.

BRIGHT was the summer sky, the mornings gay,
And JANE was young and cheerful as the Day.
Not yet to Love but Mirth she paid her vows ;
And Echo mock'd her as she call'd for Cows.

Tufts of green Broom, that full in blossom vied,
And grac'd with spotted gold the upland side,
The level fogs o'erlook'd ; too high to share ;
So lovely JANE o'erlook'd the clouds of Care ;
No meadow-flow'r rose fresher to the view,
That met her morning footsteps in the dew ;
Where, if a nodding stranger ey'd her charms,
The blush of innocence was up in arms,
Love's random glances struck th' unguarded mind,
And Beauty's magic made him look behind.

Duly as morning blush'd or twilight came,
Secure of greeting smiles and Village fame,
She pass'd the Straw-roof'd Shed, in ranges where
Hung many a well-turn'd Shoe and glitt'ring *Share* :
Where WALTER, as the charmer tripp'd along,
Would stop his roaring Bellows and his Song.—

Dawn of affection ! Love's delicious sigh !
Caught from the lightnings of a speaking eye,
That lead'st the heart to rapture or to woe,
Twas WALTER's fate thy madd'ning pow'r to know ;

And scarce to know, ere in its infant twine,
As the Blast shakes the tendrils of the Vine,
The budding bliss that full of promise grew,
The chilling blight of separation knew.
Scarce had he told his heart's unquiet case,
And JANE to shun him ceas'd to mend her pace,
And learnt to listen trembling as he spoke,
And fondly judge his words beyond a joke ;
When at the Goal that bounds our prospects here,
JANE's widow'd Mistress ended her career :
Blessings attended her divided store,
The Mansion sold, (JANE's peaceful home no more,)
A distant village own'd her for its Queen,
Another service, and another scene ;
But could another scene so pleasing prove,
Twelve weary miles from WALTER and from Love ?
The Maid grew thoughtful : yet to Fate resign'd,
Knew not the worth of what she'd left behind.
He when at eve releas'd from toil and heat,
Soon miss'd the smiles that taught his heart to beat ;

Each sabbath-day of late was wont to prove
Hope's liberal feast, the holiday of Love :
But now, upon his spirit's ebbing strength,
Came each dull hour's intolerable length.
The next had scarcely dawn'd when WALTER hied
O'er hill and dale, Affection for his guide :
O'er the brown Heath his pathless journey lay,
Where screaming Lapwings hail'd the op'ning day.
High rose the Sun, the anxious Lover sigh'd ;
His slipp'ry soles bespoke the dew was dried :
Her last farewell hung fondly on his tongue
As o'er the tufted Furze elate he sprung ;
Trifling impediments ; his heart was light,
For Love and Beauty glow'd in fancy's sight ;
And soon he gaz'd on JANE's enchanting face,
Renew'd his passion,—but, destroy'd his peace.
Truth, at whose shrine he bow'd, inflicted pain ;
And Conscience whisper'd, "*never come again.*"
For now, his tide of gladness to oppose,
A clay-cold damp of doubts and fears arose ;

Clouds, which involve, midst Love and Reason's strife,
The poor man's prospect when he takes a wife.
Though gay his journeys in the Summer's prime,
Each seem'd the repetition of a crime ;
He never left her but with many a sigh,
When tears stole down his face, she knew not why.
Severe his task those visits to forego,
And feed his heart with voluntary woe,
Yet this he did ; the wan Moon circling found
His evenings cheerless, and his rest unsound ;
And saw th' unquenched flame his bosom swell :
What were his doubts, thus let the Story tell.

A month's sharp conflict only serv'd to prove
The pow'r, as well as truth, of WALTER's love.
Absence more strongly on his mind pourtray'd
His own sweet, injur'd unoffending Maid.
Once more he'd go ; full resolute awhile,
But heard his native bells on every stile ;
The sound recall'd him with a pow'rful charm,
The Heath wide open'd, and the day was warm ;

There, where a bed of tempting green he found,
Increasing anguish weigh'd him to the ground ;
His well-grown limbs the scatter'd Daisies press'd,
While his clench'd hand fell heavy on his breast.

‘ Why do I go in cruel sport to say,
‘ I love thee, JANE, appoint the happy day ?’
Why seek her sweet ingenuous reply,
Then grasp her hand and proffer—poverty ?
Why, if I love her and adore her name,
Why act like time and sickness on her frame ?
Why should my scanty pittance nip her prime,
And chase away the rose before its time ?
I’m young, ’tis true ; the world beholds me free ;
Labour ne’er shōw’d a frightful face to me ;
Nature’s first wants hard labour *should* supply ;
But should it fail, ’twill be too late to fly.
Some Summers hence, if nought our loves annoy,
The image of my JANE may lisp her joy ;
Or, blooming boys with imitative swing
May mock my arm, and make the Anvil ring ;

‘ Then if in rags—But, O my heart, forbear,—
‘ I love the Girl, and why should I despair ?
‘ And that I love her all the village knows ;
‘ Oft from my pain the mirth of others flows ;
‘ As when a neighbour’s Steed with glancing eye
‘ Saw his par’d hoof supported on my thigh :
‘ JANE pass’d that instant ; mischief came of course ;
‘ I drove the nail awry and lam’d the Horse ;
‘ The poor beast limp’d : I bore a Master’s frown,
‘ A thousand times I wish’d the wound my own.
‘ When to these tangling thoughts I’ve been resign’d,
‘ Fury or languor has possess’d my mind,
‘ All eyes have star’d, I’ve blown a blast so strong ;
‘ Forgot to smite at all, or smote too long.’
‘ If at the Ale-house door, with careless glee
‘ One drinks to JANE, and darts a look on me ;
‘ I feel that blush which her dear name will bring,
‘ I feel :—but, guilty Love, ’tis not thy sting !
‘ Yet what are jeers ? the bubbles of an hour ;
‘ JANE knows what Love can do, and feels its pow’r ;

‘ In her mild eye fair Truth her meaning tells ;
‘ ’Tis not in looks like hers that falsehood dwells.
‘ As water shed upon a dusty way
‘ I’ve seen midst downward pebbles devious stray ;
‘ If kindred drops an adverse channel keep,
‘ The crystal friends toward each other creep ;
‘ Near, and still nearer, rolls each little tide,
‘ Th’ expanding mirror swells on either side :
‘ They touch—’tis done—receding bound’ries fly,
‘ An instantaneous union strikes the eye :
‘ So ’tis with us : for JANE would be my bride ;
‘ Shall coward fears then turn the bliss aside ?’

While thus he spoke he heard a gentle sound,
That seem’d a jarring footstep on the ground :
Asham’d of grief, he bade his eyes uncloze,
And shook with agitation as he rose ;
All unprepar’d the sweet surprise to bear,
His heart beat high for JANE herself was there.—

Flusht was her cheek ; she seem’d the full-blown flower,
For warmth gave loveliness a double power ;

Round her fair brow the deep confusion ran,
A waving handkerchief became her fan,
Her lips, where dwelt sweet love and smiling ease,
Puff'd gently back the warm assailing breeze.
' I've travell'd all these weary miles with pain,
' To see my native village once again ;
' And show my true regard for neighbour HIND ;
' Not like you, WALTER, *she* was always kind.'
'Twas thus, each soft sensation laid aside,
She buoy'd her maiden spirits up with maiden pride ;
Disclaim'd her love, e'en while she felt the sting ;
' What, come for WALTER's sake !' 'Twas no such thing
But when astonishment his tongue releas'd,
Pride's usurpation in an instant 'ceas'd :
By force he caught her hand as passing by,
And gaz'd upon her half-averted eye ;
His heart's distraction and his boding fears
She heard, and answer'd with a flood of tears ;
Precious relief ; sure friends that forward press
To tell the mind's unspeakable distress.

Ye Youths, whom crimson'd health and genuine fire
Bear joyous on the wings of young desire,
Ye, who still bow to Love's almighty sway,
What could true passion, what could WALTER say?
Age, tell me true, nor shake your locks in vain,
Tread back your paths, and be in love again;
In your young days did such a favouring hour
Show you the littleness of WEALTH and Pow'r?
Advent'rous climbers of the Mountain's brow,
While Love, their master, spreads his couch below.
'My dearest JANE,' the untaught WALTER cried,
As, half repell'd, he pleaded by her side;
'My dearest JANE, think of me as you may'—
Thus—still unutter'd what he strove to say,
They breath'd in sighs the anguish of their minds,
And took the path that led to neighbour HIND'S.

A secret joy the well-known roof inspir'd,
Small was its store, and little they desir'd;
JANE dried her tears; while WALTER forward flew,
To aid the Dame; who to the brink updrew

The pond'rous Bucket as they reach'd the well,
And scarcely with exhausted breath could tell
How welcome to her Cot the blooming Pair,
O'er whom she watch'd with a maternal care.
'What ails thee, JANE?' the wary Matron cried;
With heaving breast the modest Maid reply'd,
Now gently moving back her wooden Chair
To shun the current of the cooling air;
'Not much, good Dame; I'm weary by the way;
'Perhaps, anon, I've something else to say.'
Now, while the Seed-cake crumbled on her knee;
And Snowy Jessamine peep'd in to see;
And the transparent Lilac at the door,
Full to the Sun its purple honours bore,
The clam'rous Hen her fearless brood display'd,
And march'd around; while thus the Matron said:
'JANE has been weeping, WALTER;—prithee why?
'I've seen her laugh, and dance, but never cry.
'But I can guess; with *her* you should have been,
'When late I saw you loit'ring on the green;

‘ I’m an old Woman, and the truth may tell ;
‘ I say then, Boy, you have not us’d her well.’
JANE felt for WALTER ; shar’d his cruel pain,
And Pity urg’d her e’en to tears again.
‘ Don’t scold him, Neighbour, he has much to say,
‘ Indeed he came and met me by the way.’
The Dame resum’d—‘ Why then, my Children, why
‘ Do such young bosoms heave the piteous sigh ?
‘ The ills of Life to you are yet unknown ;
‘ Death’s sev’ring shaft, and Poverty’s cold frown :
‘ I’ve felt them both, by turns ;—but as they pass’d,
‘ Strong was my trust, and here I am at last.
‘ When I dwelt young and cheerful down the *Lane*,
‘ (And, though I say it, I was much like JANE,)
‘ O’er flow’ry fields with HIND, I lov’d to stray,
‘ And talk, and laugh, and fool the time away :
‘ And Care defy’d ; who not one pain could give,
‘ Till the thought came of how we were to live ;
‘ And then Love plied his arrows thicker still :
‘ And prov’d victorious ;—as he always will.

‘ We brav’d Life’s storm together; while that Drone,
‘ Your poor old Uncle, WALTER, liv’d alone.
‘ He died the other day: when round his bed
‘ No tender soothing tear Affection shed—
‘ Affection! ’twas a plant he néver knew;—
‘ Why should he feast on fruits he never grew?’

WALTER caught fire: nor was *he* charm’d alone
With conscious Truth’s firm elevated tone;
JANE from her seat sprang forward, half afraid,
Attesting with a blush what Goody said.
Her Lover took a more decided part:—
(O! ’twas the very Chord that touch’d his heart,)—
Alive to the best feelings Man can prize,
A Bridegroom’s transport sparkled in his eyes;
Love, conquering power, with unrestricted range
Silenc’d the arguments of Time and Change;
And led his vot’ry on, and bade him view,
And prize the light-wing’d moments as they flew:
All doubts gave way, all retrospective lore,
Whence cooler Reason tortur’d him before;

Comparison of times, the Lab'rer's hire,
And many a truth Reflection might inspire,
Sunk powerless. ' Dame, I am a fool,' he cried ;
' Alone I might have reason'd till I died.
' I caus'd those tears of JANET'S:—but as they fell
' How much I felt none but ourselves can tell.
' While dastard fears withheld me from her sight,
' Sighs reign'd by day, and hideous dreams by night ;
' 'Twas then the Soldier's plume and rolling Drum
' Seem'd for a while to strike my sorrows dumb ;
' To fly from Care then half resolv'd I stood,
' And without horror mus'd on fields of blood,
' But Hope prevail'd.—Be then the sword resign'd ;
' And I'll make *Shares* for those that stay behind,
' And you, sweet Girl,"——

• He would have added more,
Had not a glancing shadow at the door
Announc'd a guest, who bore with winning grace
His well-tim'd errand pictur'd in his face.

Around with silent reverence they stood ;
A blameless reverence—the man was good.
Wealth he had some, a match for his desires,
First on the list of active Country 'Squires.
Seeing the youthful pair with downcast eyes,
Unmov'd by Summer flowers and cloudless skies,
Pass slowly by his Gate ; his book resign'd,
He watch'd their steps, and follow'd far behind,
Bearing with inward joy, and honest pride,
A trust of WALTER's kinsman ere he died,
A hard-earn'd mite, deposited with care,
And with a miser's spirit worshipp'd there.

He found what oft the generous bosom seeks,
In the Dame's court'sies and JANE's blushing cheeks,
That consciousness of Worth, that freeborn Grace,
Which waits on Virtue in the meanest place.

' Young Man, I'll not apologise to you,
' Nor name intrusion, for my news is true ;
' 'Tis duty brings me here: your wants I've heard,
' And can relieve: yet be the dead rever'd.

Here, in this Purse, (what should have cheer'd a Wife,)
Lies, half the savings of your Uncle's life !
I know your history, and your wishes know ;
And love to see the seeds of Virtue grow.
I've a spare Shed that fronts the public road,
' Make that your Shop ; I'll make it your abode.
Thus much from me,—the rest is but your due ;'
That instant twenty pieces sprung to view.
Hoody, her dim eyes wiping, rais'd her brow,
And saw the young pair look they knew not how ;
' Perils and Power while humble minds forego,
Who gives them half a Kingdom gives them woe ;
Comforts may be procur'd and want defied,
Leav'ns ! with how small a sum, when right applied !
Give Love and honest Industry their way,
Near² but the Sun-rise of Life's little day,
Those we term poor shall oft that wealth obtain,
For which th' ambitious sigh, but sigh in vain :
Wealth that still brightens, as its stores increase ;
The calm of Conscience, and the reign of peace.

WALTER's enamour'd Soul, from news like this,
Now felt the dawnings of his future bliss ;
E'en as the Red-breast shelt'ring in a bower,
Mourns the short darkness of a passing Shower,
Then, while the azure sky extends around,
Darts on a worm that breaks the moisten'd ground,
And mounts the dripping fence, with joy elate,
And shares the prize triumphant with his mate ;
So did the Youth ;—the treasure straight became
An humble servant to Love's sacred flame ;
Glorious subjection !—Thus his silence broke :
Joy gave him words ; still quick'ning as he spoke.

‘ Want was my dread, my wishes were but few ;
‘ Others might doubt, but JANE those wishes knew.
‘ This Gold may rid my heart of pains and sighs ;
‘ But her true love is still my greatest prize.
‘ Long as I live, when this bright day comes round,
‘ Beneath my Roof your noble deeds shall sound ;
‘ But, first, to make my gratitude appear,
‘ I'll shoe your Honour's Horses for a Year ;

If clouds should threaten when your Corn is down,
I'll lend a hand, and summon half the town;
If good betide, I'll sound it in my songs,
And be the first avenger of your wrongs :
' Though rude in manners, free I hope to live :
' This Ale's not mine, no Ale have I to give ;
' Yet, Sir, though Fortune frown'd when I was born,
' Let's drink eternal friendship from this Horn.
' How much our present joy to thee we owe,
' Soon our three Bells shall let the Neighbours know ;
' The sound shall raise e'en stooping Age awhile,
' And ev'ry Maid shall meet you with a smile ;
' Long may you *live*'—the wish like lightning flew ;
By each repeated as the 'Squire withdrew.
' Long may *you* live,' his feeling heart rejoin'd ;
Leaving well pleas'd such happy Souls behind.
Hope promis'd fair to cheer them to the end ;
With Love their guide, and Goody for their friend.



THE MILLER'S MAID.

A TALE.

NEAR the High road, upon a winding stream,
An honest Miller rose to Wealth and Fame :
The noblest Virtues cheer'd his lengthen'd days,
And all the Country echo'd with his praise :

His Wife, the Doctress of the neighb'ring Poor,
Drew constant pray'rs and blessings round his door.

One Summer's night, (the hour of rest was come,)
Darkness unusual overspread their home;
A chilling blast was felt: the foremost cloud
Sprinkled the bubbling Pool; and thunder loud,
Though distant yet, menac'd the country round,
And fill'd the Heavens with its solemn sound.
Who can retire to rest when tempests lour?
Nor wait the issue of the coming hour?
Meekly resign'd she sat, in anxious pain;
He fill'd his pipe, and listen'd to the rain
That batter'd furiously their strong abode,
Roar'd in the Dam, and lash'd the pebbled road;
When, mingling with the storm, confus'd and wild,
They heard, or thought they heard, a screaming *Child*:
The voice approach'd; and, 'midst the thunder's roar,
Now loudly begg'd for Mercy at the door.

MERCY was *there*: the Miller heard the call;
His door he open'd; when a sudden squall

Drove in a wretched Girl ; who weeping stood,
Whilst the cold rain dripp'd from her in a flood.
With kind officiousness the tender Dame
Rous'd up the dying embers to a flame ;
Dry clothes procur'd, and cheer'd her shiv'ring guest,
And sooth'd the sorrows of her infant breast.
But as she stript her shoulders, lily-white,
What marks of cruel usage shock'd their sight !
Weals, and blue wounds, most piteous to behold
Upon a Child yet scarcely ten years old.

The MILLER felt his indignation rise,
Yet, as the weary stranger clos'd her eyes,
And seem'd, fatigu'd beyond her strength and years,
' Sleep, Child, (he said,) and wipe away your tears.'
They watch'd her slumbers till the storm was done ;
When thus the gen'rous Man again begun :
' See, flutt'ring sighs that rise against her will,
' And agitating dreams disturb her still !
' Dame, we should know before we go to rest,
' Whence comes this Girl, and how she came distressed.

- ‘ Wake her, and ask ; for she is sorely bruised :
‘ I long to know by whom she’s thus misused—
‘ Child, what’s your name ? how came you in the storm ?
‘ Have you no home to keep you dry and warm ?
‘ Who gave you all those wounds your shoulders show ?
‘ Where are your Parents ? Whither would you go ?

The Stranger bursting into tears, look’d pale,
And this the purport of her artless tale :

- ‘ I have no Parents ; and no friends beside :
‘ I well remember when my Mother died :
‘ My Brother cried ; and so did I that day :
‘ We had no Father ;—he was gone away.
‘ That night we left our home new clothes to wear :
‘ The *Workhouse* found them ; we were carried there.
‘ We lov’d each other dearly ; when we met
‘ We always shar’d what trifles we could get.
‘ But GEORGE was older by a year than me :—
‘ He parted from me and was sent to Sea.
‘ ‘ Good-bye, dear Phœbe,’ the poor fellow said :
‘ Perhaps he’ll come again ; perhaps he’s dead.

‘ When I grew strong enough I went to place,
‘ My Mistress had a sour ill-natur’d face ;
‘ And though I’ve been so often beat and chid,
‘ I strove to please her, Sir ; indeed, I did.
‘ Weary and spiritless to bed I crept,
‘ And always cried at night before I slept.
‘ This morning I offended ; and I bore
‘ A cruel beating, worse than all before.
‘ Unknown to all the House I ran away ;
‘ And thus far travell’d through the sultry day ;
‘ And, O don’t send me back ; I dare not go—’
‘ I send you back !’ the MILLER cried, ‘ no, no.’
Th’ appeals of Wretchedness had weight with him,
And Sympathy would warm him ev’ry limb ;
He mutter’d, glorying in the work begun,
‘ Well done, my little Wench ; ’twas nobly done !’
Then said, with looks more cheering than the fire,
And feelings such as Pity can inspire,
‘ My house has childless been this many a year ;
‘ While you deserve it you shall tarry here.’

The Orphan mark'd the ardour of his eye,
Blest his kind words, and thank'd him with a sigh.

Thus was the sacred compact doubly seal'd;
Thus were her spirits rais'd, her bruises heal'd:
Thankful, and cheerful too, no more afraid,
Thus little PHOEBE was the Miller's Maid.

Grateful they found her; patient of controul;
A most bewitching gentleness of soul
Made pleasure of what work she had to do:
She grew in stature, and in beauty too.

Five years she pass'd in this delightful home;
Five happy years: but when the sixth was come,
The MILLER, from a Market Town hard by, •
Brought home a sturdy Youth, his strength to try,
To raise the sluice-gates early every morn,
To heave his powder'd sacks and grind his corn:
And meeting PHOEBE, whom he lov'd so dear,
' I've brought you home a Husband, Girl;—d'ye hear?
' He begg'd for work; his money seem'd but scant:
' Those that will work 'tis pity they should want.

‘ So use him well, and we shall shortly see
‘ Whether he merits what I’ve done, like thee.’

Now throb’d her heart,—a new sensation quite,—
Whene’er the comely Stranger was in sight :
For he at once assiduously strove
To please so sweet a Maid, and win her love :
At ev’ry corner stopp’d her in her way ;
And saw fresh beauties opening ev’ry day.
He took delight in tracing in her face
The mantling blush, and ev’ry nameless grace,
That Sensibility would bring to view,
When Love he mention’d ;—Love, and Honour true.
But PHŒBE still was shy ; and wish’d to know
More of the honest Youth, whose manly brow
She verily believ’d was Truth’s own throne,
And all his words as artless as her own :
Most true she judg’d ; yet, long the Youth forbore
Divulging where, and how, he liv’d before ;
And seem’d to strive his History to hide,
Till fair Esteem enlisted on his side.

The MILLER saw, and mention'd, in his praise,
 The prompt fidelity of all his ways :
 Till in a vacant hour, the Dinner done,
 One day he joking cried, ' Come here, my Son !
 ' 'Tis pity that so good a Lad as you
 ' Beneath my roof should bring disorders new !
 ' But here 's my PHŒBE,—once so light and airy
 ' She 'd trip along the passage like a Fairy,—
 ' Has lost her swiftness quite, since here you came :—
 ' And yet ;—I can't perceive the Girl is lame !
 ' The obstacles she meets with still fall thicker :
 ' Old as I am I 'd turn a corner quicker.'
 The *Youth* blush'd deep ; and PHŒBE hung her head :
 • The *good Man* smil'd, and thus again he said :
 ' Not that I deem it matter of surprise,
 • That you should love to gaze at PHŒBE's eyes ;
 ' But be explicit, Boy ; and deal with honour :
 ' I feel my happiness depend upon her.
 ' When here you came you 'd sorrow on your brow ;
 ' And I 've forborne to question you till now.

THE MILLER'S MAID.

‘ First, then, say what thou art,’ He instant bow’d,
And thus, in PHŒBE’S hearing, spoke aloud :

‘ Thus far experienc’d, Sir, in you I find
‘ All that is generous, fatherly, and kind ;
‘ And while you look for proofs of real worth,
‘ You ’ll not regard the meanness of my birth.
‘ When, pennyless and sad, you met with me,
‘ I ’d just escap’d the dangers of the Sea ;
‘ Resolv’d to try my fortunes on the shore :
‘ To get my bread ; and trust the waves no more :
‘ Having no Home, nor Parents left behind,
‘ I ’d all my fortune, all my Friends, to find.
‘ Keen disappointment wounded me that morn :
‘ For, trav’ling near the spot where I was born,
‘ I at the well-known door where I was bred,
‘ Inquir’d who still was living, who was dead :
‘ But first, and most, I sought with anxious fear
‘ Tidings to gain of her who once was dear ;
‘ A Girl, with all the meekness of the dove,
‘ The constant sharer of my childhood’s love ;

‘ She call’d me *Brother*:—which I heard with pride,
‘ Though now suspect we are not so allied.
‘ Thus much I learnt ; (no more the churls would say ;)
‘ She went to service, and she ran away,
‘ And scandal added’—‘ Hold !’ the MILLER cried,
And, in an instant, stood by PHŒBE’S side ;
For he observ’d, while list’ning to the tale,
Her spirits falter’d, and her cheeks turn’d pale ;
Whilst her clasp’d hands descended to her knee,
She sinking whisper’d forth, ‘ O God, ’tis *he* !’
The good Man, though he guess’d the pleasing truth,
Was far too busy to inform the Youth ;
But stirr’d himself amain to aid his Wife,
Who soon restor’d the trembler back to life.
Awhile insensible she still appear’d ;
But, ‘ *O my Brother*,’ was distinctly heard :
‘ Th’ astonish’d Youth now held her to his breast ;
And tears and kisses soon explain’d the rest.

Past deeds now from each tongue alternate fell :
For news of dearest import both could tell.

Fondly, from childhood's tears to youth's full prime,
They match'd the incidents of jogging time;
And prov'd that, when with Tyranny oppress'd,
Poor PHŒBE groan'd with wounds and broken rest,
GEORGE felt no less : was harass'd and forlorn ;
A rope's end follow'd him both night and morn.
And in that very storm when PHŒBE fled,
When the rain drench'd her yet unshelter'd head ;
That very Storm he on the Ocean brav'd,
The Vessel founder'd, and the Boy was sav'd !
Mysterious Heav'n !—and O with what delight—
She told the happy issue of her flight :
To his charm'd heart a living picture drew ;
And gave to hospitality its due !
The list'ning Host observ'd the gentle Pair ;
And ponder'd on the means that brought them there :
Convinc'd, while unimpeach'd their Virtue stood,
'Twas HEAV'N's high Will that he should do them good
But now the anxious Dame, impatient grown,
Demanded what the Youth had heard, or known,

Whereon to ground those doubts but just exprest;—
 Doubts, which must interest the feeling breast;
 ‘ Her Brother wert thou, GEORGE?—how; prithee say:
 ‘ Canst thou forego, or cast that name away?’
 ‘ No living proofs have I;’ the Youth reply’d,
 ‘ That we by closest ties are not allied;
 ‘ But in my memory live, and ever will,
 ‘ A mother’s dying words—I hear them still:
 ‘ She said, to one who watch’d her parting breath,
 ‘ *‘ Don’t separate the Children at my death,*
 ‘ *‘ They’re not both mine: but’*—here the scene was clos’d,
 ‘ She died; and left us helpless and expos’d;
 ‘ Nor Time hath thrown, nor Reason’s opening pow’r,
 ‘ One friendly ray on that benighted hour.’

Ne’er did the Chieftains of a Warring State
 Hear from the *Oracle* their half-told fate
 With more religious fear, or more suspense,
 Than PHOEBE now endur’d:—for ev’ry sense
 Became absorb’d in this unwelcome theme;
 Nay, ev’ry meditation, ev’ry dream,

Th' inexplicable sentence held to view ;
' *They're not both mine,*' was ev'ry morning new :
For, till this hour, the Maid had never prov'd
How far she was enthrall'd, how much she lov'd :
In that fond character he first appear'd ;
His kindness charm'd her, and his smiles endear'd :
This dubious mystery the passion crost ;
Her peace was wounded, and her Lovér lost.
For GEORGE, with all his resolution strove
To check the progress of his growing love ;
Or, if he e'er indulg'd a tender kiss,
Th' unravell'd secret robb'd him of his bliss.
Health's foe, Suspense, so irksome to be borne,
An ever-piercing and retreating thorn,
Hung on their Hearts, when Nature bade them rise,
And stole Content's bright ensign from their eyes.

The good folk saw the change, and griev'd to find
These troubles labouring in PHŒBE's mind ;
They lov'd them both ; and with one voice propos'd
The only means whence *Truth* might be disclos'd ;

That, when the Summer Months should shrink the rill,
And scarce its languid stream would turn the Mill,
When the Spring broods, and Pigs, and Lambs, were rear'd,
(A time when GEORGE and PHŒBE might be spar'd,)
Their birth-place they should visit once again,
To try with joint endeavours to obtain
From Record, or Tradition, what might be
To chain, or set their chain'd affections free :
Affinity beyond all doubts to prove ;
Or clear the road for Nature and for Love.
Never, till now, did PHŒBE count the hours,
Or think *May* long, or wish away its flowers ;
With mutual sighs both fann'd the wings of Time ;
As we climb Hills and gladden as we climb,
And reach at last the distant promis'd seat,
Casting the glowing landscape at our feet.
Oft had the Morning Rose with dew been wet,
And oft the journeying Sun in glory set,
Beyond the willow'd meads of vigorous grass,
The steep green hill, and woods they were to pass ;

When now the day arriv'd: Impatience reign'd;
And GEORGE,—by trifling obstacles detain'd,—
His bending Blackthorn on the threshold prest,
Survey'd the windward clouds, and hop'd the best. .
PHŒBE, attir'd with every modest grace,
While Health and Beauty revell'd in her face,
Came forth; but soon evinc'd an absent mind,
For, back she turn'd for something left behind;
Again the same, till GEORGE grew tir'd of home,
And peevishly exclaim'd, '*Come, Phœbe, come.*'
Another hindrance yet he had to feel:
As from the door they tripp'd with nimble heel,
A poor old Man, foot-founder'd and alone,
Thus urgent spoke, in Trouble's genuine tone:
' My pretty Maid, if happiness you seek,
' May disappointment never fade your cheek !—
• ' Yours be the joy;—yet, feel another's woe:
' O leave some little gift before you go.'
His words struck home; and back she turn'd again,
(The ready friend of indigence and pain,) “

To banish hunger from his shatter'd frame ;
And close behind her, Lo, the MILLER came,
With jug in hand, and cried, ' GEORGE, why such haste ?
' Here ; take a draught ; and let that *Soldier* taste.'
' Thanks for your bounty, 'Sir,' the *Veteran* said ;
Threw down his Wallet, and made bare his head ;
And straight began, though mix'd with doubts and fears,
Th' unprefac'd History of his latter years.
' I cross'd th' *Atlantic* with my Comrades brave,
' Where sickness sweeps whole regiments to the grave ;
' Yet I've escap'd ; and bear my arms no more ;
' My age discharg'd me when I came on shore.
' My *Wife*, I've heard,'—and here he wip'd his eyes,—
' In the cold corner of the Church-yard lies.
' By her consent it was I left my home :
' Employment fail'd, and poverty was come ;
' The Bounty tempted me ;—she had it all :
' We parted ; and I've seen my betters fall.
' Yet, as I'm spar'd, though in this piteous case,
' I'm travelling homeward to my native place ;

‘ Though should I reach that dear remember’d spot,
‘ Perhaps OLD GRAINGER will be quite forgot.’

All eyes beheld young GEORGE with wonder start;
Strong were the secret bodings of his heart;
Yet not indulg’d: for he with doubts survey’d
By turns the Stranger and the lovely Maid.

‘ Had you no Children ?’—‘ Yes, young Man, I’d two :

‘ A *Boy*, if still he lives, as old as you :

‘ Yet not my own ; but likely so to prove ;

‘ Though but the pledge of an unlawful Love :

‘ I cherish’d him, to hide a *Sister’s* shame :

‘ He shar’d my best affections, and my name.

‘ But why, young folks, should I detain you here ?

‘ Go: and may blessings wait upon your cheer ;

‘ I too will travel on ;—perhaps to find

‘ The only treasure that I left behind.

‘ Such kindly thoughts my fainting hopes revive !

‘ PHOEBE, my Cherub, ART *thou* still alive ?’

Could Nature hold !—Could youthful Love forbear !

GEORGE clasp’d the wond’ring *Maid*, and whisper’d, ‘ *Ther*

' *You're mine for ever !*—O, sustain the rest ;
' And hush the tumult of your throbbing breast.'
Then to the *Soldier* turn'd, with manly pride,
And fondly led his long-intended *Bride*.
' Here, see your *Child* ; nor wish a sweeter flow'r.
' 'Tis GEORGE that speaks ; thou 'lt bless the happy hour !—
' Nay, be compos'd ; for all will yet be well,
' Though here our history's too long to tell.'—

A long-lost Father found, the mystery clear'd,
What mingled transports in *her* face appear'd !
The gazing *Veteran* stood with hands uprais'd—
' Art thou *indeed* my Child ! then, God be prais'd.'
O'er his rough cheeks the tears profusely spread :
Such as fools say become not Men to shed ;
Past hours of bliss, regenerated charms,
Rose, when he felt his Daughter in his arms :
So tender was the scene, the generous DAME
Wept, as she told of PHOEBE's virtuous fame,
And the good Host, with gestures passing strange,
Abstracted seem'd through fields of joy to range ;

Rejoicing that his favour'd roof should prove
VIRTUE's asylum, and the nurse of LOVE;
Rejoicing that to him the task was given,
While his full Soul was mounting up to Heav'n.

But now, as from a dream his Reason sprung,
And heartiest greetings dwelt upon his tongue :
The sounding Kitchen floor at once receiv'd
The happy group, with all their fears 'reliev'd ;
' Soldier,' he cried, ' you 've found your Girl ; 'tis true :
' But suffer *me* to be a Father too ;
' For, never Child that blest a Parent's knee,
' Could shew more duty than she has to me.
' Strangely she came ; Affliction chas'd her hard :
' I pitied her ;—and this is my reward !
' Here sit you down ; recount your perils o'er ;
' Henceforth be this your home ; and grieve no more :
' Plenty hath shower'd her dewdrops on my head ;
' Care visits not my Table, nor my Bed.
' My Heart's warm wishes thus then I fulfil ;
' My Dame and I can live without the Mill.

‘ GEORGE, take the whole; I’ll near you still remain,
‘ To guide your judgment in the choice of grain :
‘ In Virtue’s path commence your prosperous life;
‘ And from my hand receive your worthy Wife.
‘ Rise, PHOEBE; rise, my Girl!—kneel not to me;
‘ But to THAT POW’R who interpos’d for thee.
‘ Integrity hath mark’d your favourite Youth;
‘ Fair budding Honour, Constancy, and Truth :
‘ Go to his arms;—and may unsullied joys
‘ Bring smiling round me, rosy Girls and Boys !
‘ I’ll love them for thy sake. And may your days
‘ Glide on, as glides the Stream that never stays;
‘ Bright as whose shingled bed, till life’s decline,
‘ May all your Worth, and all your Virtues shine !’

THE WIDOW
TO HER HOUR-GLASS.

COME, friend, I'll turn thee up again :
Companion of the lonely hour !
Spring thirty times hath fed with rain
And cloth'd with leaves my humble bower,
 Since thou hast stood
 In frame of wood,
On Chest or Window by my side :
At every Birth still thou wert near,
Still spoke thine admonitions clear—
 And, when my Husband died.

I've often watch'd thy streaming sand
And seen the growing Mountain rise,

And often found Life's hopes to stand
On props as weak in Wisdom's eyes :

Its conic crown

Still sliding down,

Again heap'd up, then down again ;

The sand above more hollow grew,

Like days and years still filt'ring through,

And mingling joy and pain.

While thus I spin and sometimes sing,

(For now and then my heart will glow,)

Thou measur'st Time's expanding wing :

By thee the noontide hour I know :

Though silent thou,

Still shalt thou flow,

And jog along thy destin'd way :

But when I glean the sultry fields,

When Earth her yellow Harvest yields,

Thou get'st a Holiday.

Steady as Truth, on either end
Thy daily task performing well,
Thou'rt Meditation's constant friend,
And strik'st the Heart without a Bell:

Come, lovely May:

Thy lengthen'd day
Shall gild once more my native plain;
Curl inward here, sweet Woodbine flow'r;-
Companion of the lonely hour,
I'll turn thee up again.



MARKET-NIGHT.

‘ O WINDS, howl not so long and loud ;
‘ Nor with your vengeance arm the snow :
‘ Bear hence each heavy-loaded cloud :
‘ And let the twinkling Star-beams glow.

‘ Now sweeping floods rush down the slope,
‘ Wide scattering ruin—Stars, shine soon !
‘ No other light, my Love can hope;
‘ Midnight will want the joyous *Moon*.

‘ O guardian Spirits !—Ye that dwell
‘ Where woods, and pits, and hollow ways,
‘ The lone night trav’ller’s fancy swell
‘ With fearful tales, of older days,—

‘ Press round him:—guide his willing steed
‘ Through darkness, dangers, currents, snows;
‘ Wait where, from shelt’ring thickets freed,
‘ The dreary Heath’s rude whirlwind blows;

‘ That o’er the Hill with furious sweep
‘ Now writhes, now rends the shiv’ring tree—
‘ Sure-footed beast, thy road thou’lt keep:
‘ Nor storm nor darkness startles thee:

' O blest assurance, (trusty steed,)
 ' To thee the buried road is known:
 ' *Home*, all the spur thy footsteps need,
 ' When loose the frozen rein is thrown.

' Between the roaring blasts that shake
 ' The naked Elder at the door,
 ' Though not one prattler to me speak,
 ' Their sleeping sighs delight me more.

' Sound is their rest:—they little know
 ' What pain, what cold, their Father feels:
 ' But dream, perhaps, they see him now,
 ' While each the promis'd Orange peels.

' Would it were so!—the fire burns bright,
 ' And on the warming trencher gleams;
 ' In Expectation's raptur'd sight
 ' How precious his arrival seems!

‘ I’ll look abroad !—’tis piercing cold !—
‘ How the bleak wind assails his breast !
‘ Yet there the parting clouds unfold ;
‘ The storm is verging o’er the West.

‘ There shines a *Star* !—O welcome Sight !
‘ Through the thin vapours bright’ning still !
‘ Yet, ’twas beneath the fairest night
‘ The murd’rer stain’d yon lonely Hill.

‘ Mercy, kind Heav’n ! such thoughts dispel !
‘ No voice, no foot is heard around !
‘ Perhaps he’s near the haunted Well !
‘ But, *Dapple* knows each inch of ground.

‘ Distressing hour ! uncertain fate !
‘ O Mercy, Mercy, guide him home !—
‘ Hark !—then I heard the distant gate,—
‘ Repeat it, Echo ; quickly, come !

‘ One minute now will ease my fears—
‘ Or, still more wretched must I be?
‘ No: surely Heaven has spar’d our tears:
‘ I see him, cloth’d in snow;—’tis he.—

‘ Where have you stay’d? put down your load.
‘ How have you borne the storm, the cold?
‘ What horrors did I not forbode!—
‘ That Beast is worth his weight in gold.’

Thus spoke the joyful Wife;—then ran
In grateful steams to hide her head:
Dapple was hous’d, the weary Man
With joy glanc’d o’er the Children’s bed.

‘ What, all asleep!—so best;’ he cried;
‘ O what a night I’ve travell’d through!
‘ Unseen, unheard, I might have died;
‘ But Heav’n has brought me safe to you.

‘ Dear Partner of my nights and days,
‘ That smile becomes thee !—Let us then
‘ Learn, though mishap may cross our ways,
‘ It is not ours to reckon when.’



THE FAKENHAM GHOST.

A BALLAD.

THE Lawns were dry in Euston Park;
 (Here Truth inspires my Tale;)
The lonely footpath, still and dark,
 Led over Hill and Dale.

Benighted was an ancient Dame,
And fearful haste she made
To gain the vale of Fakenham,
And hail its Willow shade.

Her footsteps knew no idle stops,
But follow'd faster still;
And echo'd to the darksome Copse
That whisper'd on the Hill;

Where clam'rous Rooks, yet scarcely hush'd,
Bespoke a peopled shade;
And many a wing the foliage brush'd,
And hov'ring circuits made.

The dappled herd of grazing Deer
That sought the Shades by day,
Now started from her path with fear,
And gave the Stranger way.

Darker it grew; and darker fears
Came o'er her troubled mind;
When now, a short quick step she hears
Come patting close behind.

She turn'd; it stopt!—nought could she see
Upon the gloomy plain!
But, as she strove the Sprite to flee,
She heard the same again.

Now terror seiz'd her quaking frame:
For, where the path was bare,
The trotting Ghost kept on the same!
She mutter'd many a pray'r.

Yet once again, amidst her fright,
She tried what sight could do;
When through the cheating glooms of night,
A MCYSTER stood in view.

Regardless of whate'er she felt,
It follow'd down the plain !
She own'd her sins, and down she knelt,
And said her pray'rs again.

Then on she sped: and Hope grew strong,
The white park-gate in view ;
Which pushing hard, so long it swung,
That *Ghost* and all pass'd through.

Loud fell the gate against the post !
Her heart-strings like to crack :
For, much she fear'd the grisly *Ghost*
Would leap upon her back.

Still on, pat, pat, the Goblin went,
As it had done before:—
Her strength and resolution spent,
She fainted at the door.

Out came her Husband, much surpris'd :

Out came her Daughter dear :

Good-natur'd souls ! all unadvis'd

Of what they had to fear.

The Candle's gleam pierc'd through the night,

Some short space o'er the green ;

And there the little trotting Sprite

Distinctly might be seen.

An *Ass's Foal* had lost its Dam

Within the spacious Park ;

And, simple as the playful Lamb,

Had follow'd in the dark.

No Goblin he ; no imp of sin :

No crimes had ever known.

They took the shaggy stranger in,

And rear'd him as their own.

His little hoofs would rattle round
Upon the Cottage floor:
The Matron learn'd to love the sound
That frighten'd her before.

A favourite the Ghost became;
And, 'twas his fate to thrive:
And long he liv'd and spread his fame,
And kept the joke alive.

For many a laugh went through the Vale;
And some conviction too:—
Each thought some other Goblin tale,
Perhaps, was just as true.

THE FRENCH MARINER.

A BALLAD.

AN old *French Mariner* am I,
Whom Time hath render'd poor and gray:
Hear, conqu'ring *Britons*, ere I die,
What anguish prompts me thus to say.

I've rode o'er many a dreadful wave,
I've seen the reeking blood descend:
I've heard the last groans of the brave;—
The shipmate dear, the steady Friend.

'Twas when *De Grasse* the battle join'd,
And struck, on *April's* fatal morn:
I left three smiling boys behind,
And saw my Country's Lily torn.

There, as I brav'd the storms of Fate,
Dead in my arms my Brother fell;
Here sits forlorn his widow'd Mate,
Who weeps whene'er the tale I tell.

Thy reign, sweet Peace, was o'er too soon;
War, piecemeal, robs me of my joy:
For, on the blood-stain'd *first* of *June*,
Death took my *eldest* fav'rite Boy.

The other two enrag'd arose,
'Our Country claims our lives,' they said.
With them I lost my Soul's repose,
That fatal hour my last hope fled.

With BRUEYS the proud NILE they sought :
Where one in ling'ring wounds expir'd ;
While yet the other bravely fought
The Orient's magazine was fir'd.

And must I mourn my Country's shame ?
And envious cursè the conqu'ring Foe ?
No more I feel that thirst of Fame ;—
All I can feel is private woe.

E'en all the joy that Vict'ry brings,
(Her bellowing Guns, and flaming pride,) ,
Cold, momentary comfort flings
Around where weeping Friends reside ;

Whose blighted bud no Sun shall cheer,
Whose Lamp of Life no longer shine :
Some Parent, Brother, Child, most dear,
Who ventur'd, and who died like mine.

Proud-crested Fiend, the World's worst foe,
Ambition; canst thou boast one deed,
Whence no unsightly horrors flow,
Nor private peace is seen to bleed?

Ah! why do these old eyes remain
To see succeeding mornings rise?
My Wife is dead, my Children slain,
And Poverty is all my prize.

Yet shall not poor enfeebled Age
Breathe forth revenge; but kneel and pray:
'O God, who seest the Battle's rage,
'Take from men's Hearts that rage away:

'From the vindictive tongue of Strife,
'Bid Hatred and false Glory flee;
'That babes may meet advancing life,
'Nor feel the woes that light on me.'

D O L L Y.

" *Ingenuous trust, and confidence of Love.*"

THE Bat began with giddy wing
His circuit round the Shed, the Tree;
And clouds of dancing Gnats to sing
A summer-night's serenity.

Darkness crept slowly o'er the East!
Upon the Barn-roof watch'd the Cat;
Sweet breath'd the ruminating Beast;
At rest where DOLLY musing sat.

A simple Maid, who could employ
The silent lapse of Ev'ning mild,
And lov'd its solitary joy :
For DOLLY was Reflection's child.

He who had pledg'd his word to be
Her life's dear guardian, far away,
The flow'r of Yeoman Cavalry,
Bestrode a Steed with trappings gay.

And thus from Mem'ry's treasur'd sweets,
And thus from Love's pure fount she drew
That peace which busy care defeats,
And bids our pleasures bloom anew.

' Six weeks of absence have I borne
' Since HENRY took his fond farewell :
' The charms of that delightful morn
' My tongue could thus for ever tell.

‘He at my Window whistling loud,
Arous’d my lightsome heart to go:
‘Day, conqu’ring, climb’d from cloud to cloud;
‘The fields all wore a purple glow.

We stroll’d the bordering flow’rs among:
‘One hand the Bridle held behind;
‘The other round my waist was flung:
‘Sure never youth spoke half so kind!

‘The rising Lark I could but hear;
‘And jocund seem’d the song to be:
‘But sweeter sounded in my ear,
‘“Will DOLLY still be true to me?”

‘From the rude Dock my skirt had swept
‘A fringe of clinging burs so green;
‘Like them our hearts still closer crept,
‘And hook’d a thousand holds unseen.

‘ High o’er the road each branching bough
‘ Its globes of silent dew had shed ;
‘ And on the pure-wash’d sand below
‘ The dimpling drops around had spread.

‘ The sweet-brier op’d its pink-ey’d rose,
‘ And gave its fragrance to the gale ;
‘ Though modest flow’rs may sweets disclose,
‘ More sweet was HENRY’S earnest tale.

‘ He seem’d, methought, on that dear morn,
‘ To pour out all his heart to me ;
‘ As if, the separation borne,
‘ The coming hours would joyless be.

‘ A bank rose high beside the way,
‘ And full against the morning-Sun ;
‘ Of heav’nly blue the violets gay
‘ His hand invited one by one.

‘The posy with a smile he gave ;
‘I saw his meaning in his eyes :
‘The wither’d treasure still I have ;
‘My bosom holds the fragrant prize.

‘With his last kiss he would have vow’d ;
‘But blessings crowding forc’d their way :
‘Then mounted he his Courser proud ;
‘His time was gone, he could not stay.

‘Then first I felt the parting pang ;—
‘Sure the worst pang the Lover feels !
‘His Horse unruly from me sprang,
‘The pebbles flew beneath his heels ;

‘Then down the road his vigour tried,
‘His rider gazing, gazing still ;
‘*‘My dearest, I’ll be true !’* he cried :—
‘And, if he lives, I’m sure he will !’

LINES

OCCASIONED BY

A VISIT TO WHITTLEBURY FOREST, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

GENIUS of the Forest Shades !
Lend thy pow'r, and lend thine ear :
A Stranger trod thy lonely glades,
Amidst thy dark and bounding Deer ;
Inquiring Childhood claims the verse,
O let them not inquire in vain ;
Be with me while I thus rehearse
The glories of thy Sylvan Reign,

Thy Dells by wint'ry currents worn,
Secluded haunts, how dear to me !
From all but Nature's converse borne,
No ear to hear, no eye to see.
Their honour'd leaves the green Oaks rear'd,
And crown'd the upland's graceful swell ;
While answ'ring through the vale was heard
Each distant Heifer's tinkling bell.

Hail, Greenwood shades, that stretching far,
Defy e'en Summer's noontide pow'r,
When August in his burning Car
Withholds the Cloud, withholds the Show'r.
The deep-ton'd Low from either Hill,
Down hazel aisles and arches green ;
(The Herd's rude tracks from rill to rill)
Roar'd echoing through the solemn scene.

From my charm'd heart the numbers sprung,
Though Birds had ceas'd the choral lay :
I pour'd wild raptures from my tongue,
And gave delicious tears their way.
Then, darker shadows seeking still,
Where human foot had seldom stray'd,
I read aloud to every Hill
Sweet Emma's Love, 'the Nut-brown Maid.'

Shaking his matted mane on high,
The gazing Colt would raise his head ;
Or, tim'rous Doe would rushing fly,
And leave to me her grassy bed :
Where, as the azure sky appear'd
Through Bow'rs of ev'ry varying form,
'Midst the deep gloom methought I heard
The daring progress of the storm.

How would each sweeping pon'drous bough
Resist, when straight the Whirlwind cleaves,
Dashing in strength'ning eddies through
A roaring wilderness of leaves !
How would the prone descending show'r,
From the green Canopy rebound !
How would the lowland torrents pour !
How deep the pealing thunder sound !

But Peace was there: no lightnings blaz'd:—
No clouds obscur'd the face of heav'n:
Down each green op'ning while I gaz'd,
My thoughts to home and you were giv'n.
O tender minds ! in life's gay morn
Some clouds must dim your coming day ;
Yet, bootless pride and falsehood scorn,
And peace like this shall cheer your way.

Now, at the dark Wood's stately side,
Well pleas'd I met the Sun again;
Here fleeting Fancy travell'd wide!
My seat was destin'd to the Main:
For, many an Oak lay stretch'd at length,
Whose trunks (with bark no longer sheath'd)
Had reach'd their full meridian strength
Before your Father's Father breath'd!

Perhaps they'll many a conflict brave,
And many a dreadful storm defy;
Then groaning o'er the adverse wave
Bring home the flag of victory.
Go, then, proud Oaks: we meet no more!
Go, grace the scenes to me denied,
The white Cliffs round my native shore,
And the loud Ocean's swelling tide.

‘Genius of the Forest Shades,’
Sweet, from the heights of thy domain,
When the grey ev’ning shadow fades,
To view the Country’s golden grain !
To view the gleaming Village Spire
Midst distant groves unknown to me ;
Groves that, grown bright in borrow’d fire,
Bow o’er the peopled Vales to thee !

Where was thy Elfin train, that play
Round *Wake’s* huge Oak, their fav’rite tree,
Dancing the twilight hours away ?
Why were they not reveal’d to me ?
Yet, smiling Fairies left behind,
Affection brought you all to view ;
To love and tenderness resign’d,
My heart heav’d many a sigh for you.

When Morning still unclouded rose,
Refresh'd with sleep and joyous dreams,
Where fruitful fields with woodlands close,
I trac'd the births of various streams.
From beds of Clay, here creeping rills
Unseen to parent *Ouse* would steal;
Or, gushing from the northward Hills,
Would glitter through *Tove's* winding dale.

But ah! ye cooling springs, farewell!
Herds, I no more your freedom share;
But long my grateful tongue shall tell
What brought your gazing stranger there.
'Genius of the Forest Shades,
'Lend thy power, and lend thine ear;'
Let dreams still lengthen thy long glades,
And bring thy peace and silence here.

SONG
FOR
A HIGHLAND DROVER
RETURNING FROM ENGLAND.

Now fare-thee-well, England: no further I'll roam;
But follow my shadow that points the way home:
Your gay southern shores shall not tempt me to stay;
For my Maggy's at Home, and my Children at play!
'Tis this makes my bonnet sit light on my brow,
Gives my sinews their strength and my bosom its glow.

Farewell, Mountaineers! my companions, adieu;
Soon, many long miles when I'm sever'd from you,
I shall miss your white Horns on the brink of the burn,
And o'er the rough Heaths, where you'll never return;
But in brave English pastures you cannot complain,
While your Drover speeds back to his Maggy again.

O Tweed ! gentle Tweed, as I pass your green vales,
More than life, more than Love, my tir'd Spirit inhales ;
There Scotland, my darling, lies full in my view,
With her bare-footed Lasses and Mountains so blue ;
To the mountains away ; my heart bounds like the hind
For home is so sweet, and my Maggy so kind.

As day after day I still follow my course,
And in fancy trace back ev'ry Stream to its source,
Hope cheers me up hills, where the road lies before,
O'er hills just as high, and o'er tracks of wild Moor ;
The keen polar Star nightly rising to view ;
But Maggy 's my Star, just as steady and true.

O Ghosts of my Fathers ! O heroes, look down !
Fix my wand'ring thoughts on your deeds of renown ;
For the glory of Scotland reigns warm in my breast,
And fortitude grows both from toil and from rest ;
May your deeds and your worth be for ever in view,
And may Maggy bear sons not unworthy of you.

Love, why do you urge me, so weary and poor ?
I cannot step faster, I cannot do more :
I've pass'd silver Tweed ; e'en the Tay flows behind :
Yet fatigue I'll disdain ;—my reward I shall find ;
Thou, sweet smile of innocence, thou art my prize ;
And the joy that will sparkle in Maggy's blue eyes.

She'll watch to the southward ;—perhaps she will sigh,
That the way is so long, and the Mountains so high ;
Perhaps some huge rock in the dusk she may see,
And will say in her fondness, ' that surely is he !'
Good Wife, you're deceiv'd ; I'm still far from my home ;
Go, sleep, my dear Maggy,—to-morrow I'll come.

A WORD
TO
TWO YOUNG LADIES.

WHEN tender Rose-trees first receive,
On half-expanded Leaves, the Show'r;
Hope's gayest pictures we believe,
And anxious watch each coming flow'r.

Then, if beneath the genial Sun
That spreads abroad the full-blown May,
Two infant Stems the rest out-run,
Their buds the first to meet the day,

With joy their op'ning tints we view,
While morning's precious moments fly :
My pretty Maids, 'tis thus with *you*,
The fond admiring gazer, *I*.

Preserve, sweet Buds, where'er you be,
The richest gem that decks a Wife;
That charm of *female modesty*;
And let sweet Music give it life.

Still may the fav'ring Muse be found:
Still circumspect the paths ye tread:
Plant moral truths in Fancy's ground;
And meet old Age without a dread.

•

Yet, ere that comes, while yet ye quaff
The cup of Health without a pain,
I'll shake my grey hairs when you laugh,
And, when you sing, be young again.



N A N C Y.

A SONG.

You ask me, dear Nancy, what makes me presume,
That you cherish a secret affection for me ?
When we see the Flow'rs bud, don't we look for the Bloom
Then, sweetest, attend, while I answer to thee.

When we Young Men with pastimes the Twilight beguile,
I watch your 'plump cheek till it dimples with joy :
And observe, that whatever occasions the smile,
You give me a glance ; but provokingly coy.

Last month, when wild strawberries pluckt in the grove
Like beads on the tall seeded grass you had strung ;
You gave me the choicest ; I hop'd 'twas for Love :
And I told you my hopes while the Nightingale sung.

Remember the Viper :—'twas close at your feet,
How you started, and threw yourself into my arms ;
Not a Strawberry there was so ripe nor so sweet
As the lips which I kiss'd to subdue your alarms.

As I pull'd down the clusters of Nuts for my Fair,
What a blow I receiv'd from a strong bending bough ;
Though Lucy and other gay lasses were there,
Not one of them shew'd such compassion as you.

And was it compassion ?—by Heaven, 'twas more !
A telltale betrays you ;—that blush on your cheek.
Then come, dearest Maid, all your trifling give o'er,
And whisper what Candour will teach you to speak.

Can you stain my fair Honour with one broken vow ?
Can you say that I've ever occasion'd a pain ?
On Truth's honest base let your tenderness grow ;
I swear to be faithful, again and again.

ROSY HANNAH.

A SPRING, o'erhung with many a flow'r,
The grey sand dancing in its bed,
Embank'd beneath a Hawthorn bower,
Sent forth its waters near my head:
A rosy Lass approach'd my view;
I caught her blue eye's modest beam:
The stranger nodded 'how d'ye do?'
And leapt across the infant stream.

The water heedless pass'd away:
With me her glowing image stay'd:
I strove, from that auspicious day,
To meet and bless the lovely Maid.

I met her where beneath our feet
Through downy Moss the wild Thyme grew
Nor Moss elastic, flow'rs though sweet,
Match'd Hannah's cheek of rosy hue.

I met her where the dark Woods wave,
And shaded verdure skirts the plain;
And when the pale Moon rising gave
New glories to her clouded train.
From her sweet cot upon the Moor
Our plighted vows to Heaven are flown;
Truth made me welcome at her door,
And rosy Hannah is my own.

SONG.

THE SHEPHERD

AND HIS

DOG ROVER.

ROVER, awake ! the grey Cock crows !
Come, shake your coat and go with me !
High in the East the green Hill glows ;
And glory crowns our shelt'ring Tree.
The Sheep expect us at the fold :
My faithful Dog, let's haste away,
And in his earliest beams behold,
And hail, the source of cheerful day.

Half his broad Orb o'erlooks the Hill,
And, darting down the Valley, flies ;
At every casement welcome still,
The golden summons of the skies.

Go, fetch my Staff; and o'er the dews
Let Echo waft thy gladsome voice.
Shall we a cheerful note refuse
When rising Morn proclaims, 'rejoice'?

Now then we'll start; and thus I'll sling
Our store, a trivial load to bear:
Yet, ere night comes, should hunger sting,
I'll not encroach on *Rover's* share.
The fresh breeze bears its sweets along;
The Lark but chides us while we stay:
Soon shall the Vale repeat my song;
Go, brush before, away! away!

HUNTING SONG.

YE darksome Woods where Echo dwells,
Where ev'ry bud with freedom swells
 To meet the glorious day :
The morning breaks ; again rejoice ;
And with old Ringwood's well-known voice
 Bid tuneful Echo play.

We come, ye Groves, ye Hills, we come :
The vagrant Fox shall hear his doom,
 And dread our jovial train.
The shrill Horn sounds, the courser flies,
While ev'ry Sportsman joyful cries,
 " There's Ringwood's voice again ! "

Ye Meadows, hail the coming throng ;
Ye peaceful Streams that wind along,
Repeat the Hark-away :
Far o'er the Downs, ye Gales that sweep,
The daring Oak that crowns the steep,
The roaring peal convey.

The chiming notes of cheerful Hounds,
Hark ! how the hollow Dale resounds ;
The sunny Hills how gay !
But where's the note, brave Dog, like thine ?
Then urge the Steed, the chorus join,
'Tis Ringwood leads the way !

LUCY:

A SONG.

THE favourite Bird is soaring still :
My Lucy, haste thee o'er the dale ;
The Stream's let loose, and from the Mill,
All silent comes the balmy gale ;
 Yet, so lightly on its way,
 Seems to whisper, " Holiday."

The pathway flow'rs that bending meet,
And give the Meads their yellow hue,
The May-bush and the Meadow-sweet
Reserve their fragrance all for you.
 Why then, Lucy, why delay ?
 Let us share the Holiday.

Since there thy smiles, my charming Maid,
Are with unfeigned rapture seen,
To Beauty be the homage paid ;
Come, claim the triumph of the Green.

Here's my Hand, come, come away ;
Share the merry Holiday.

A promise too my Lucy made,
(And shall my heart its claim resign ?)
That ere May-flow'rs again should fade,
Her heart and hand should both be mine.

Hark'ye, Lucy, this is May ;
Love shall crown our Holiday.

WINTER SONG.

DEAR Boy, throw that Icicle down,
And sweep this deep snow from the door :
Old Winter comes on with a frown ;
A terrible frown for the poor.
In a Season so rude and forlorn,
How can Age, how can Infancy bear
The silent neglect and the scorn
Of those who have plenty to spare ?

Fresh broach'd is my Cask of old Ale,
Well-tim'd now the frost is set in ;
Here's JOB come to tell us a tale,
We'll make him at home to a pin.
While my Wife and I bask o'er the fire,
The roll of the Seasons will prove,
That Time may diminish desire,
But cannot extinguish true love.

O the pleasures of neighbourly chat,
If you can but keep scandal away !
To learn what the world has been at,
And what the great Orators say ;
Though the Wind through the crevices sing,
And Hail down the chimney rebound ;
I'm happier than many a king
While the Bellows blows Bass to the sound.

Abundance was never my lot :
But out of the trifle that's giv'n,
That no curse may alight on my Cot,
I'll distribute the bounty of Heav'n ;
The fool and the slave gather wealth :
But if I add nought to my store,
Yet, while I keep conscience in health,
I've a Mine that will never grow poor.

WILD FLOWERS;
OR,
PASTORAL AND LOCAL POETRY.



ABNER AND THE WIDOW JONES.

A FAMILIAR BALLAD.

“ WELL ! I ’m determin’d ; that’s enough :—

“ Gee, Bayard ! *move your poor old bones,

“ I’ll take to-morrow, smooth or rough,

“ To go and court the WIDOW JONES.

“ Our master talks of stable-room,
“ And younger horses on his grounds ;
“ 'Tis easy to foresee thy doom,
“ Bayard, thou 'lt go to feed the hounds.

“ But could I win the widow's hand,
“ I'd make a truce 'twixt death and thee ;
“ For thou upon the best of land
“ Should'st feed, and live, and die with me.

“ And must the pole-axe lay thee low ?
“ And will they pick thy poor old bones ?
“ No—hang me if it shall be so,—
“ If I can win the WIDOW JONES.”

Twirl went his stick ; his curly pate
A bran new hat uplifted bore ;
And ABNER, as he leapt the gate,
Had never look'd so gay before.

And every spark of love reviv'd
That had perplex'd him long ago,
When busy folks and fools contriv'd
To make his MARY answer—*no*.

But whether, freed from recent vows,
Her heart had back to ABNER flown,
And mark'd him for a second spouse,
In truth is not exactly known.

Howbeit, as he came in sight,
She turn'd her from the garden stile,
And downward look'd with pure delight,
With half a sigh and half a smile.

She heard his sounding step behind,
The blush of joy crept up her cheek,
As cheerly floated on the wind,
“Hoi! MARY JONES—what! won't you speak?”

Then, with a look that ne'er deceives,
She turn'd, but found her courage fled ;
And scolding sparrows from the eaves
Peep'd forth upon the stranger's head,

Down ABNER sat, with glowing heart,
Resolv'd, whatever might betide,
To speak his mind, no other art
He ever knew, or ever tried.

And gently twitching MARY's hand,
The bench had ample room for two,
His first word made her understand
The ploughman's errand was to woo.

“ My MARY—may I call thee so ?

“ For many a happy day we've seen,

“ And if not mine, ay, years ago,

“ Whose was the fault ? you might have been !

“ All that’s gone by : but I’ve been musing,
 “ And vow’d, and hope to keep it true,
 “ That she shall be my own heart’s choosing
 “ Whom I call wife.—Hey, what say you ?

“ And as I drove my plough along,
 “ And felt the strength that’s in my arm,
 “ Ten years, thought I, amidst my song,
 “ I’ve been head-man at Harewood Farm.

“ And now, my own dear MARY’s free,
 “ Whom I have lov’d this many a day,
 “ Who knows but she may think on *me* ?
 “ I’ll go hear what she has to say.

* Perhaps what little stock of land
 “ She holds, but knows not how to till,
 “ Will suffer in the widow’s hand,
 “ And make poor MARY poorer still.

“ That scrap of land, with one like her,
“ How we might live ! and be so blest !
“ And who should MARY JONES prefer ?
“ Why, surely, him who loves her best !

“ Therefore, I’m come to-night, sweet wench,
“ I would not idly thus intrude,”——
MARY look’d downward on the bench,
O’erpower’d by love and gratitude :

And lean’d her head against the vine,
With quick’ning sobs of silent bliss,
Till ABNER cried, “ You must be mine,
“ You must,”—and seal’d it with a kiss.

She talk’d of shame, and wip’d her cheek,
But what had shame with them to do,
Who nothing meant but truth to speak,
And downright honour to pursue ?

His eloquence improv'd apace,

As manly [•]pity fill'd his mind ;

“ You know poor Bayard ; here's the case,—

“ He's past his labour, old, and blind :

“ If you and I should but agree

“ To settle here for good and all,

“ Could you give all your heart to me,

“ And grudge that poor old rogue a stall ?

•

“ I'll buy him, for the dogs shall never

“ Set tooth upon a friend so true ;

“ He'll not live long, but I for ever

“ Shall know I gave the beast his due.

“ 'Mongst all I've known of ploughs and carts,

“ And ever since I learn'd to drive,

“ He was not match'd in all these parts ;

“ There was not such a horse alive !

“ Ready, as birds to meet the morn,
“ Were all his efforts at the plough :
“ Then, the mill-brook with hay or corn,
“ Good creature ! how he ’d spatter through !

“ He was a horse of mighty pow’r,
“ Compact in frame, and strong of limb ;
“ Went with a chirp from hour to hour !
“ Whip-cord ! ’twas never made for him.

“ I left him in the shafts behind,
“ His fellows all unhook’d and gone,
“ He neigh’d, and deem’d the thing unkind,
“ Then, starting, drew the load alone !

“ But I might talk till pitch-dark night,
“ And then have something left to say ;
“ But, Mary, am I wrong or right,
“ Or, do I throw my words away ?

“ Leave me, or take me and my horse ;
“ I’ve told thee truth, and all I know :
“ Truth *should* breed truth ; that comes of course ;
“ If I sow wheat, why wheat will grow.”

“ Yes, Abner, but thus soon to yield,
“ Neighbours would flee, and look behind ’em ;
“ Though, with a husband in the field,
“ Perhaps, indeed, I should not mind ’em.

“ I’ve known your generous nature well ;
“ My first denial cost me dear ;
“ How this may end we cannot tell,
“ But, as for Bayard, bring him here.”

“ Bless thee for that,” the ploughman cried,
At once both starting from the seat,
He stood a guardian by her side,
But talk’d of home,—’twas growing late.

Then step for step within his arm,
She cheer'd him down the dewy way ;
And no two birds upon the farm
E'er prated with more joy than they.

What news at home ? The smile he wore
One little sentence turn'd to sorrow ;
An order met him at the door,
“ Take Bayard to the dogs to-morrow.”

“ Yes, yes,” thought he ; and heav'd a sigh,
“ Die, when he will he's not your debtor :
“ I must obey, and he *must* die,—
“ That 's if I can't contrive it better.”

He left his MARY late at night,
And had succeeded in the main ;
No sooner peep'd the morning light
But he was on the road again !

“ Suppose she should refuse her hand ?
“ Such thoughts will come, I know not why ;
“ Shall I, without a wife or land,
“ Want an old horse ? then wherefore buy ? ”

From bush to bush, from stile to stile,
Perplex'd he trod the fallow ground,
And told his money all the while,
And weigh'd the matter round and round.

“ I'll borrow, that's the best thought yet ;
“ MARY shall save the horse's life.—
“ Kind-hearted wench ! what, run in debt
“ Before I know she'll be my wife ?

“ These women won't speak plain and free.—
“ Well, well, I'll keep my service still ;
“ She has not *said* she'd marry me,
“ But yet I dare to say she will.

“ But while I take this shay-brain’d course,
“ And like a fool run to and fro,
“ Master, perhaps, may sell the horse !
“ Sell him !—this instant home I’ll go.”

The nightly rains had drench’d the grove,
He plung’d right on with headlong pace ;
A man but half as much in love
Perhaps had found a cleaner place.

The day rose fair ; with team a-field,
He watch’d the farmer’s cheerful brow ;
And in a lucky hour reveal’d
His secret at his post, the plough.

And there without a whine began,
“ Master, you’ll give me your advice ;
“ I’m going to marry—If I can—
“ And want old Bayard ; what’s his price ?

THE WIDOW JONES.

“ For MARY JONES last night agreed,

“ Or near upon ’t, to be my wife :

“ The horse’s value I don’t heed,

“ I only want to save his life.”

“ Buy him, hey ! ABNER ! trust me, I ,

, “ Have not the thought of gain in view ;

“ Bayard’s best days we’ve seen go by ;

“ He shall be cheap enough to you,”

,

, The wages paid, the horse brought out,

The hour of separation come ;

The farmer turn’d his chair about,

“ Good fellow, take him, take him home !

“ You’re welcome, ABNER, to the beast,

“ For you’ve a faithful servant been ;

“ They’ll thrive I doubt not in the least,

“ Who know what work and service mean.’

ABNER AND

The maids at parting, one and all,
From diff'rent windows diff'rent tones,
Bade him farewell with many a bawl,
And sent their love to MARY JONES.

He wav'd his hat, and turn'd away,
When loud the cry of children rose ;
“ ABNER, good bye !” they stopt their play ;
“ There goes poor Bayard ! there he goes !”

Half choak'd with joy, with love, and pride,
He now, with dainty clover fed him,
Now took a short triumphant ride,
And then again got down and led him.

And hobbling onward up the hill,
The Widow's house was full in sight,
He pull'd the bridle harder still,
“ Come on, we shan't be there to night.”

She met them with a smile so sweet,
The stable-door was open thrown ;
The blind horse lifted high his feet,
And, loudly snorting, laid him down.

O Victory ! from that stock of laurels
You keep so snug for camps and thrones,
Spare us *one twig* from all their quarrels,
For ABNER and the WIDOW JONES.

TO
MY OLD OAK TABLE.

FRIEND of my peaceful days, substantial friend,
Whom wealth can never change, nor int'rest bend,
I love thee like a child. Thou wert to me
The dumb companion of my misery,
And oft'ner of my joys ;—then as I spoke,
I shar'd thy sympathy, Old Heart of Oak !
For surely when my labour ceas'd at night,
With trembling, feverish hands, and aching sight,
The draught that cheer'd me and subdu'd my care,
On thy broad shoulders thou wert proud to bear.
O'er thee, with expectation's fire elate,
I've sat and ponder'd on my future fate :

On thee, with winter muffins for thy store,
I've lean'd,^o and quite forgot that I was poor.

Where dropp'd the acorn that gave birth to thee?
Can'st thou trace back thy line of ancestry?
We're match'd, old friend, and let us not repine,
Darkness o'erhangs thy origin and mine;
Both may be truly honourable: yet,
We'll date our honours^o from the day we met;
When, of my worldly wealth the parent stock,
Right welcome up the Thames from Woolwich Dock
Thou cam'st, when hopes ran high and love was young;
But soon our olive-branches round thee sprung;
Soon came the days that tried a faithful wife,
The noise of children, and the cares of life.
Then, midst the threat'nings of a wintry sky,
That cough which blights the bud of infancy,
The dread of parents, Rest's inveterate foe,
Came like a plague, and turn'd my songs to woe.

Rest! without thee, what strength can long survive?
What spirit keep the flame of Hope alive?

The midnight murmur of the cradle gave
Sounds of despair ; and chilly as the grave
We felt its undulating blast arise,
Midst whisper'd sorrows and ten thousand sighs.
Expiring embers warn'd us each to sleep,
By turns to watch alone, by turns to weep,
By turns to hear, and keep from starting wild,
The sad, faint wailings of a dying child.
But Death, obedient to Heav'n's high command,
Withdrew his jav'lin, and unclench'd his hand ;
The little sufferers triumph'd over pain,
Their mother smil'd, and bade me hope again.
Yet Care gain'd ground, Exertion triumph'd less,
Thick fell the gathering terrors of Distress ;
Anxiety, and Griefs without a name,
Had made their dreadful inroads on my frame ;
The creeping Dropsy, cold as cold could be,
Unnerv'd my arm, and bow'd my head to thee.
Thou to thy trust, old friend, hast not been true ;
These eyes the bitterest tears they ever knew

Let fall upon thee ; now all wip'd away ;
But what from mem'ry shall wipe out that day ?
The great, the wealthy of my native land,
To whom a guinea is a grain of sand,
I thought upon them, for my *thoughts* were free,
But all unknown were then my woes and me.

Still, Resignation was my dearest friend,
And Reason pointed to a glorious end ;
With anxious sighs, a parent's hopes and pride,
I wish'd to live—I trust I could have died !
But winter's clouds pursu'd their stormy way,
And March brought sunshine with the length'ning day,
And bade my heart arise, that morn and night
Now throb'd with irresistible delight.
Delightful 'twas to leave disease behind,
And feel the renovation of the mind !
To lead abroad, upborne on Pleasure's wing,
Our children, midst the glories of the spring ;
Our fellow-sufferers, our only wealth,
To gather daisies in the breeze of health !

'Twas then, too, when our prospects grew so fair,
And Sabbath bells announc'd the morning pray'r ;
Beneath that vast gigantic dome we bow'd,
That lifts its flaming cross above the cloud ;
Had gain'd the centre of the chequer'd floor ;—
That instant, with reverberating roar,
Burst forth the pealing organ——mute we stood,
The strong sensation boiling through my blood,
Rose in a storm of joy, allied to pain,
I wept, and worshipp'd God, and wept again ;
And felt, amidst the fervour of my praise,
The sweet assurances of better days.

In that gay season, honest friend of mine,
I mark'd the brilliant sun upon thee shine ;
Imagination took her flights so free,
Home was delicious with my book and thee ;
The purchas'd nosegay, or brown ears of corn,
Were thy gay plumes upon a summer's morn,
Awakening memory, that disdains control,
They spoke the darling language of my soul ;

They whisper'd tales of joy, of peace, of truth,
And conjur'd back the sunshine of my youth :
Fancy presided at the joyful birth,
I pour'd the torrent of my feelings forth ;
Conscious of *truth* in Nature's humble track,
And wrote "The Farmer's Boy" upon thy back !
Enough, old friend :—thou 'rt mine ; and shalt partake,
While I have pen to write, or tongue to speak,
Whatever fortune deals me.—Part with thee ?
No, not till death shall set my spirit free ;
For know, should plenty crown my life's decline,
A most important duty may be thine :
Then, guard me from Temptation's base control,
From apathy and littleness of soul :
The sight of thy old frame, so rough, so rude,
Shall twitch the sleeve of nodding Gratitude ;
Shall teach me but to venerate the more
Honest Oak Tables and their guests—the poor ;
Teach me unjust distinctions to deride,
And falsehoods gender'd in the brain of Pride ;

Shall give to Fancy still the cheerful hour,
To Intellect, its freedom and its power ;
To Hospitality's enchanting ring
A charm, which nothing but thyself can bring.
The man who would not look with honest pride
On the tight bark that stemm'd the roaring tide,
And bore him, when he bow'd the trembling knee,
Home, through the mighty perils of the sea,
I love him not.—He ne'er shall be my guest ;
Nor sip my cup, nor witness how I'm blest ;
Nor lean, to bring my honest friend to shame,
A sacrilegious elbow on thy frame ;
But thou through life a monitor shalt prove,
Sacred to Truth, to Poetry, and Love.

THE HORKEY.

A PROVINCIAL BALLAD.

WHAT gossip prattled in the sun,
Who talk'd him fairly down,
Up, Mem'ry! tell; 'tis Suffolk fun,
And lingo of their own.

Ah! *Judie Twitchet*!* though thou 'rt dead,
With thee the tale begins;
For still seems thrumming in my head
The rattling of thy pins.

* *Judie Twitchet* was a real person, who lived many years with my mother's cousin Bannock, at Honington.

Thou Queen of knitters ! for a hall
Of worsted was thy pride ;
With dangling stockings great and small,
And world of clack beside !

“ We did so laugh ; the moon shone bright ;
“ More fun you never knew ;
“ ’Twas FARMER CHEERUM’S *Horkey Night*,
“ And I, and GRACE, and SUE——

“ But bring a stool, sit round about,
“ And boys, be quiet, pray ;
“ And let me tell my story out ;
“ ’Twas *sitch* a merry day !

“ The butcher whistled at the door,
“ And brought a load of meat ;
“ Boys rubb’d their hands, and cried, ‘ there’s more !
“ Dogs wagg’d their tails to see ’t.

“ On went the boilers till the *hake**

“ Had much ado to bear 'em ;

“ The magpie talk'd for talking' sake,

“ Birds sung :—but who could hear 'em !

“ Creak went the jack ; the cats were *scar'd*,

“ We had not time to heed 'em,

“ The *owl hins* cackled in the yard,

“ For we forgot to feed 'em !

“ Yet 'twas not I, as I may say,

“ Because as how, d'ye see,

“ I only help'd there for the day ;

“ They cou'dn't lay 't to me.

“ Now MRS. CHEERUM'S best lace cap

“ Was mounted on her head,

“ Guests at the door began to rap,

“ And now the cloth was spread.

* A sliding pot-hook.

- “ Then clatter went the earthen plates—
 “ ‘ Mind, JUDIE,’ was the cry ;
“ I could have *cop’t* * them at their pates ;
 “ ‘ Trenchers for me,’ said I,

“ That look so clean upon the ledge,
 “ All proof against a fall ;
“ They never turn a sharp knife’s edge ;—
 “ But fashion rules us all.

“ Home came the jovial *Horkey* load,
 “ Last of the whole year’s crop ;
“ And GRACE amongst the green boughs rode
 “ Right plump upon the top.

“ This way and that the waggon reel’d,
 “ And never queen rode higher ;
“ *Her* cheeks were colour’d in the fields,
 “ And ours before the fire.

Thrown.

“ The laughing harvest-folks, and JOHN,
“ Came in and look'd askew ;
“ 'Twas my red face that set them on,
“ And then they leer'd at SUE.

“ And Farmer CHEERUM went, good man,
“ And broach'd the *Horkey beer* ;
“ And *sitch a mort** of folks began
“ To eat up our good cheer.

“ Says he, ‘ Thank God for what’s before us ;
“ That thus we meet agen ;’
“ The mingling voices, like a chorus,
“ Join'd cheerfully, ‘ Amen.’—

“ Welcome and plenty, there they found 'em,
“ The ribs of beef grew light ;
“ And puddings—till the boys got round 'em,
“ And then they vanish'd quite !

Such a number.

“ Now all the guests, with Farmer CROUDER,

“ Began to prate of corn ;

“ And we found out they talk’d the louder,

“ The oft’ner pass’d the Horn.

“ Out came the nuts ; we set a cracking ;

“ The ale came round our way :

“ *By gom*, we women fell a clacking

“ As loud again as they.

“ John sung ‘ Old Benbow ’ loud and strong,

“ And I, ‘ The Constant Swain ; ’

“ ‘ Cheer up, my Lads,’ was Simon’s song,

“ ‘ We ’ll conquer them again.’

“ Now twelve o’clock was drawing nigh,

“ And all in merry cue ;

“ I knock’d the cask, ‘ O, ho ! ’ said I,

“ ‘ We ’ve almost conquer’d you.’

THE HORKEY.

“ *My Lord** begg’d round, and held his hat,

“ Says Farmer GRUFF, says he,

“ ‘There’s many a Lord, SAM, I know that,

“ ‘Has begg’d as well as thee.’

“ Bump in his hat the shillings tumbled

“ All round among the folks ;

‘ Laugh if you wool,’ said Sam, and mumbled,

“ ‘You pay for all your jokes.’

“ Joint stock, you know, among the men,

“ To drink at their own charges ;

“ So up they got full drive, and then

“ Went out to halloo *largess* !

“ And sure enough the noise they made !!—

—“ But let me mind my tale :

“ We follow’d them, we worn’t afraid,

“ We ’ad all been drinking ale.

* The leader of the reapers.

“ As they stood hallooing back to back,

“ We, lightly as a feather,

“ Went sideling round, and in a crack

“ Had pinn’d their coats together.

“ ’Twas near upon ’t as light as noon ;

“ ‘ *A largess,*’ on the hill,

“ They shouted to the full round moon,

“ I think I hear ’em still !

“ But when they found the trick, my stars !

“ They well knew who to blame,

“ Our giggles turn’d to loud ha, ha’s,

“ And *arter* us they came.

“ The hindmost was the dairy-maid,

“ And SAM came blundering by ;

“ She could not shun him, so they said ;

“ I *know* she did not try.

• Strangled. •

“ And off set JOHN, with all his might,
“ To chase me down the yard,
“ Till I was nearly *gran’d** outright ;
“ He hugg’d so woundy hard.

“ Still they kept up the race and laugh,
“ And round the house we flew ;
“ But hark ye ! the best fun by half
“ Was SIMON arter SUE.

“ She car’d not, dark nor light, not she,
“ So, near the dairy door,
“ She pass’d a clean white hog, you see,
“ They’d *kilt* the day before.

“ High on the *spirket*† there it hung,
“ ‘ Now, SUSIE—what can save ye ?’
“ Round the cold pig his arms he flung,
“ And cried, ‘ Ah ! here I have ye !’

† An iron hook.

“ The farmers heard what SIMON said,
“ And what a noise ! good lack !
“ Some almost laugh’d themselves *to dead*,
“ And others clapt his back.

“ We all at once began to tell
“ What fun we had abroad ;
“ But Simon stood our jeers right well ;
—“ He fell asleep and snor’d.

“ Then in his button-hole upright,
“ Did Farmer CROUDER put
“ A slip ’of paper, twisted tight,
“ And held the candle *to’t*.

“ It smok’d, and smok’d, beneath his nose,
“ The harmless blaze crept higher ;
“ Till with a vengeance up he rose,
“ Fire, JUDIE, SUE ! fire, fire !

* For the purpose.

† Giddy, thoughtless.

- “ The clock struck one—some talk’d of parting,
 “ Some said it was a sin,
 “ And *hitch’d* their chairs ;—but those for starting
 “ Now let the moonlight in.
- “ *Owd* women, loitering *for the nonce*,*
 “ Stood praising the fine weather ;
 “ The menfolks took the hint at once
 “ To kiss them altogether.
- “ And out ran every soul beside,
 “ A *shanny-pated*† crew ;
 “ *Owd* folks could neither run nor hide,
 “ So some *ketch’d* one, some *tew*.
- “ They *skrigg’d*‡ and began to scold,
 “ But laughing got the master ;
 “ Some *quack’ling*§ cried, ‘let go your hold ;’
 “ The farmers held the faster.

† To struggle quick.

§ Choaking.

THE HORKEY.

“ All innocent, that I ’ll be sworn,

“ There worn’t a bit of sorrow,

“ And women, if their gowns *are* torn,

“ Can mend them on the morrow.

“ Our shadows helter skelter danc’d

“ About the moonlight ground ;

“ The wondering sheep, as on we pranc’d,

“ Got up and gaz’d around.

“ And well they might—till Farmer CHEERUM,

“ Now with a hearty glee,

“ Bade ad good morn as he came near ’em,

“ And then to bed went he.

“ Then off we stroll’d this way and that,

“ With merry voices ringing ;

“ And Echo answer’d us right pat,

“ As home we rambled singing.

“ For, when we laugh’d, it laugh’d again,

“ And to our own doors follow’d !

“ ‘ Yo, ho !’ we cried ; ‘ Yo, ho !’ so plain,

“ The misty meadow halloo’d.

“ That’s all my tale, and all the fun,

“ Come, turn your wheels about ;

“ My worsted, see !—that’s nicely done,

“ Just held my story out ! !”

.

Poor JUDIE !—Thus Time knits or spins

The worsted from Life’s ball !

Death stopt thy tales, and stopt thy plans,

—And so he’ll serve us all.



‘ THE BROKEN CRUTCH.

A TALE.

“ I TELL, you, Peggy,” said a voice behind
A hawthorn hedge, with wild briars thick entwin’d,
Where unseen trav’llers down a shady way
Journey’d besides the swaths of new-mown hay,

“ I tell you, PEGGY, 'tis a time to prove
“ Your fortitude; your virtue, and your love.
“ From honest poverty our lineage sprung,
“ Your mother was a servant quite as young ;—
“ You weep ; perhaps *she* wept at leaving home ;
“ Courage, my girl, nor fear the days to come.
“ Go still to church, my PEGGY, plainly drest,
“ And keep a living conscience in your breast ;
“ Look to yourself, my lass, the maid's best fame,
“ Beware, nor bring the MELDRUMS into shame :
“ Be modest, to the voice of truth attend,
“ Be honest, and' you 'll always find a friend :
“ Your uncle GILBERT, stronger far than I,
“ Will see you safe ; on him you must rely :
“ I've walk'd too far ; this lameness, oh ! the pain ;
“ Heav'n bless thee, child ! I 'll halt me back again ;
“ But when your first fair holiday may be,
“ Do, dearest PEGGY, spend your hours with me.”

Young HERBERT BROOKS, in strength and manhood bold,
Who, round the meads, his own possessions, stroll'd,

O'erheard the charge, and with a heart so gay,
Whistled his spaniel, and pursu'd his way.⁴⁸
Soon cross'd his path, and short obeisance paid,
Stout GILBERT MELDRUM and a country maid ;
A box upon his shoulder held full well
Her worldly riches, but the truth to tell
She bore the chief herself : that nobler part,
That beauteous gem, an uncorrupted heart.
And then that native loveliness ! that cheek !
It bore the very tints her betters seek.
At such a sight the libertine would glow
With all the warmth that *he* can ever know ;
Would send his thoughts abroad without control,
The glimm'ring moonshine of his little soul :
“ Above the reach of justice I shall soar,
“ Her friends may rail, not punish ; they're too poor
“ That very thought the rapture will enhance,
“ Poor, young, and friendless ; what a glorious chance
“ A few spare guineas may the conquest make,—
“ I love the treachery for treachery's sake,—

“ And when her wounded honour jealous grows,

“ I’ll cut away ten thousand oaths and vows,

“ And bravely boast, all snarling fools defying,

• “ How I, *a girl out-witted*,—just by lying.”

Such was not HERBERT—he had never known

Love’s genuine smiles, nor suffer’d from his frown ;

And as to that most honourable part

• Of planting daggers in a parent’s heart,

A novice quite :—he past his hours away,

Free as a bird, and buxom as the day ;

Yet, should a lovely girl by chance arise,

Think not that HERBERT BROOKS would shut his eyes.

On thy calm joys with what delight I dream, •

Thou dear green valley of my native stream !

• Fancy o’er thee still waves th’ enchanting wand,

And every nook of thine is fairy land,

And ever will be, though the axe should smite

In Gain’s rude service, and in Pity’s spite,

Thy clust’ring alders, and at length invade

The last, last poplars, that compose thy shade :

Thy stream shall still in native freedom stray,
And undermine the willows in its way ;
These, nearly worthless, may survive this storm,
This scythe of desolation call'd " Reform."
No army past that way ! yet are they fled,
The boughs that, when a school-boy, screen'd my head
I hate the murd'rous axe ; estranging more
The winding vale from what it was of yore,
Than e'en mortality in all its rage,
And all the change of faces in an age.
" Warmth," will they term it, that I speak so free ;
They strip thy shades,—thy shades so dear to me !
In HERBERT's days woods cloth'd both hill and dale ;
But peace, Remembrance ! let us tell the tale.

His home was in the valley, elms grew round
His moated mansion, and the pleasant sound
Of woodland birds that loud at day-break sing,
With the first cuckoos that proclaim the spring,
Flock'd round his dwelling ; and his kitchen smoke,
That from the tow'ring rook'ry upward broke,

Of joyful import to the poor hard by,
Stream'd a glad sign of hospitality ;
So fancy pictures ; but its day is o'er ;
The moat remains ; the dwelling is no more !
Its name denotes its melancholy fall,
For village children call the spot " Burnt-Hall."
But where's the maid, who in the meadow-way
Met HERBERT BROOKS amongst the new-mown hay ?

Th' adventure charm'd him, and next morning rose
The Sabbath, with its silence and repose ;
The bells ceas'd chiming, and the broad blue sky
Smil'd on his peace, and met his tranquil eye
Inverted, from the foot-bridge on his way
To that still house where all his fathers lay ;
There in his seat, each neighbour's face he knew—
The stranger girl was just before his pew !
He saw her kneel, with meek, but cheerful air,
And whisper the response to every prayer ;
And, when the humble roof with praises rung,
He caught the Hallelujah from her tongue,

Rememb'ring with delight the tears that fell,
When the poor father bade his child farewell ;
And now, by kindling tenderness beguil'd,
He blest the prompt obedience of that child,
And link'd his fate with hers :—for, from that day,
Whether the weeks past cheerily away,
Or deep revolving doubts procur'd him pain,
The same bells chim'd—and there she was again !
What could be done ? they came not there to woo,
On holy ground,—though love is holy too.

They met upon the foot-bridge one clear morn,
She in the garb by village lasses worn ;
He, with unbutton'd frock that careless flew,
And buskin'd to resist the morning dew ;
With downcast look she courtsied to the ground,
Just in his path—no room to sidle round.

“ Well, pretty girl, this early rising yields
“ The best enjoyment of the groves and fields,
“ And makes the heart susceptible and meek,
“ And keeps alive that rose upon your cheek.

“ I long’d to meet you, PEGGY, though so shy,
“ I’ve watch’d your steps, and learn’d your history ;
“ You love your poor lame father, let that be
“ A happy presage of your love for me.
“ Come then, I’ll stroll these meadows by your side,
“ I’ve seen enough to wish you for my bride,
“ And I *must* tell you so. Nay, let me hold
“ This guiltless hand, I prize it more than gold ;
“ Of that I have my share, but fain would prove
“ The sterling wealth of honourable love ;
“ My lands are fruitful, and my flocks increase,
“ My house knows plenty, and my servants peace ;
“ One blessing more will crown my happy life, •
“ Like Adam, pretty girl, I want a wife.”

Need it be told his suit was not denied,
With youth, and wealth, and candour on his side?
Honour took charge of love so well begun,
And accidental meetings, one by one,
Increas’d so fast midst time’s unheeded flight,
That village rumour married them outright ;

Though wiser matrons, doubtful in debate,
Pitied deluded PEGGY's hapless fate.
Friends took th' alarm, "And will he then disgrace
"The name of BROOKS with this plebeian race?"
Others, more lax in virtue, not in pride,
Sported the wink of cunning on one side;
"He'll buy, no doubt, what PEGGY has to sell;
"A little gallantry becomes him well."
Meanwhile the youth, with self-determin'd aim,
Disdaining fraud, and pride's unfeeling claim,
Above control, pursu'd his generous way,
And talk'd to PEGGY of the marriage-day.
Poor girl! she heard, with anguish and with doubt,
What her too-knowing neighbours preach'd about,
That HERBERT would some nobler match prefer,
And surely never, never marry her;
Yet, with what trembling and delight she bore
The kiss, and heard the vow, 'I'll doubt no more!'
"Protect me, HERBERT, for your honour's sake
"You will," she cried, "nor leave my heart to break;

Then wrote to uncle GILBERT, joys, and fears,
And hope, and trust, and sprinkled all with tears.

Rous'd was the dormant spirit of the brave,
E'en lameness rose to succour and to save ;
For, though they both rever'd young HERBERT's name,
And knew his unexceptionable fame ;
And though the girl had honestly declar'd
Love's first approaches, and their counsel shar'd,
Yet, that he truly meant to take for life
The poor and lowly PEGGY for a wife ;
Or, that she was not doom'd to be deceiv'd,
Was out of bounds :—it *could not* be believ'd.
“ Go, GILBERT, save her ; I, you know, am lame ;
“ Go, brother, go, and save my child from shame.
“ Haste, and I'll pray for your success the while,
“ Go, go ;”—then bang'd his crutch upon the stile :—
It snapt.—E'en GILBERT trembled while he smote,
Then whipt the broken end beneath his coat ;
“ Ay, ay, I'll settle them ; I'll let them see
“ Who's to be conqu'ror this time, I or he !”

Then off he set, and with enormous strides,
Rebellious mutterings and oaths besides,
O'er cloverfield and fallow, bank and briar,
Pursu'd the nearest cut, and fann'd the fire
That burnt within him.—Soon the Hall he spied,
And the grey willows by the water side ;
Nature cried “halt !” nor could he well refuse ;
Stop, GILBERT, breathe awhile, and ask *the news*.
“ News ?” cried a stooping grandame of the vale,
“ Ay, rare news too ; I'll tell you such a tale ;
“ But let me rest ; this bank is dry and warm ;
“ Do you know PEGGY MELDRUM at the farm ?
“ Young HERBERT's girl ? He 'as cloth'd her all in white ;
“ You never saw so beautiful a sight !
“ Ah ! he 's a fine young man, and such a face !
“ I knew his grandfather and all his race ;
“ He rode a tall white horse, and look'd so big,
“ But how shall I describe his hat and wig ?”
“ Plague take his wig,” cried GILBERT, “ and his hat,
“ Where 's PEGGY MELDRUM ? can you tell me *that* ?”

“ Ay ; but have patience, man ! you ’ll hear anon,

“ For I shall come to her as I go on,

“ So hark ’ye, friend ; his grandfather I say,”—

“ Poh, poh,”—cried GILBERT, as he turn’d away.

Her eyes were fix’d, her story at a stand,

The snuff-box lay half-open’d in her hand ;

“ You great, ill-manner’d clown ! but I must bear it ;

“ You oaf, to ask the news, and then won’t hear it !”

But GILBERT had gain’d forty paces clear,

When the reproof came murm’ring on his ear.

Again he ask’d the first that pass’d him by ;

A cow-boy stopt his whistle to reply,

“ Why, I ’ve a mistress coming home, that ’s all ;

“ They ’re playing Meg’s diversion at the Hall ;

“ For master’s gone, with PEGGY, and his cousin,

“ And all the lady-folks, about a dozen,

“ To church, down there ; he ’ll marry *one* no doubt,

“ For that, it seems, is what they ’re gone about ;

“ I know it by their laughing and their jokes,

“ Tho’ they *wor’nt* ask’d at church like other folks.”

GILBERT kept on, and at the Hall-door found
The winking servants, where the jest went round :
All expectation ; ay, and so was he,
But not with heart so merry and so free.
The kitchen table, never clear from beef,
Where hunger found its solace and relief,
Free to all strangers, had no charms for him,
For agitation worried every limb ;
Ale he partook, but appetite had none,
And grey-hounds watch'd in vain to catch the bone.
All sounds alarm'd him, and all thoughts perplex'd,
With dogs, and beef, himself, and all things vex'd,
Till with one mingled caw above his head,
Their gliding shadows o'er the court-yard spread,
The rooks by thousands rose : the bells struck up ;
He guess'd the cause, and down he set the cup,
And listening, heard, amidst the general hum,
A joyful exclamation, " Here they come !" ⁹
Soon Herbert's cheerful voice was heard above,
Amidst the rustling hand-maids of his love,

And GILBERT follow'd without thought or dread,
The broad oak stair-case thunder'd with his tread ;
Light tript the party, gay as gay could be,
Amidst their bridal dresses—there came he !
And with a look that guilt could ne'er withstand,
Approach'd his niece and caught her by the hand,
“ Now, are you married, PEGGY, yes or no ?
“ Tell me at once, before I let you go !”
Abrupt he spoke, and gave her arm a swing,
But the same moment felt the wedding ring,
And stood confus'd.—She wip'd th' empassion'd tear,
“ I am, I am ; but is my father here ?”
HERBERT stood by, and sharing with his bride,
That perturbation which she strove to hide ;
“ Come, honest GILBERT, you're too rough this time,
“ Indeed here's not the shadow of a crime :
“ But where's your brother ? When did you arrive ?
“ We waited long, for NATHAN went at five !”
All this was Greek to GILBERT, downright Greek ;
He knew not what to think, nor how to speak.

The case was this; that NATHAN with a cart
To fetch them both at day-break was to start.
And so he did—but ere he could proceed,
He suck'd a charming portion with a reed,
Of that same wedding-ale, which was that day
To make the hearts of all the village gay;
Brim-full of glee he trundled from the Hall,
And as for sky-larks, he out-sung them all;
Till growing giddy with his morning cup,
He, stretch'd beneath a hedge, the reins gave up;
The horse graz'd soberly without mishap,
And NATHAN had a most delightful nap
For three good hours—Then, doubting, when he woke,
Whether his conduct would be deem'd a joke,
With double haste perform'd just half his part,
And brought the lame JOHN MELDRUM in his cart.
And at the moment GILBERT's wrath was high,
And while young HERBERT waited his reply,
The sound of rattling wheels was at the door;
“There's my dear father now,”—they heard no more,

The bridegroom glided like an arrow down,
And GILBERT ran, though something of a clown,
With his best step ; and cheer'd with smiles and pray'rs
They bore old JOHN in triumph up the stairs :
Poor PEGGY, who her joy no more could check,
Clung like a dewy woodbine round his neck ;
And all stood silent——GILBERT, off his guard,
And marvelling at virtue's rich reward,
Loos'd the one loop that held his coat before,
Down thump't the broken crutch upon the floor !
They started, half alarm'd, scarce knowing why,
But through the glist'ning rapture of his eye
The bridegroom smil'd, then chid their simple fears,
And rous'd the blushing PEGGY from her tears ;
Around the uncle in a ring they came,
'And mark'd his look of mingled pride and shame.

“ Now honestly, good GILBERT, tell us true,
“ What meant this cudgel ? What was it to do ?
“ I know your heart suspected me of wrong,
“ And that most true affection urg'd along

“ Your feelings and your wrath ; you were beside
“ Till now the rightful guardian of the bride.
“ But why this cudgel ? ” — “ Guardian ! that ’s the case,
“ Or else to-day I had not seen this place,
“ But JOHN about the girl was so perplex’d,
“ And I, to tell the truth, so mortal vex’d,
“ That when he broke *this crutch*, and stamp’d and cried,
“ For JOHN and PEGGY, Sir, I could have died,
“ Ay, that I could ; for she was such a child,
“ So tractable, so sensible, so mild,
“ That if between you roguery had grown
“ (Begging your pardon,) ’twould have been your own ;
“ She would not hurt a fly.—So off I came,
“ And had I found you injuring her fame,
“ And base enough to act as hundreds would,
“ To ruin a poor maid—because you *could*,
“ With this same cudgel, (you may smile or frown,)
“ An’ please you, Sir, I meant to knock you down.”
A burst of laughter rang throughout the Hall,
And PEGGY’S tongue, though overborne by all,

Pour'd its warm blessings ; for, without control,
The sweet unbridled transport of her soul
Was obviously seen, till HERBERT'S kiss
Stole, as it were, the eloquence of bliss.

“ Welcome, my friends ; good GILBERT, here 's my hand ;

“ Eat, drink, or rest, they 're all at your command :

“ And whatsoever pranks the rest may play,

“ You still shall be the hero of the day,

“ Doubts might torment, and blunders may have teaz'd

“ Let my ale cure them ; let us all be pleas'd.

“ And as for honest JOHN, let me defend

“ The father of my new, my bosom friend ;

“ You broke your crutch, well, well, worse luck might be ;

“ I 'll be your crutch, JOHN MELDRUM, lean on me,

“ And when your lovely daughter shall complain,

“ Send GILBERT'S wooden argument again.

“ You still may wonder that I take a wife

“ From the secluded walks of humble life ;

“ On reason's solid ground my love began,

“ And let the wise confute it if they can.

“ A girl I saw, with nature’s untaught grace,
“ Turn from my gaze a most engaging face ;
“ I saw her drop the tear, I knew full well
“ She felt for *you* much more than she could tell.
“ I found her understanding, bright as day,
“ Through all impediments still forc’d its way ;
“ On that foundation shall my hopes rely,
“ The rock of genuine humility.
“ Call’d as she is to act a nobler part,
“ To rule my household, and to share my heart,
“ I trust her prudence, confident to prove
“ Days of delight, and still unfading love ;
“ And, while her inborn tenderness survives,
“ That heav’nly charm of mothers and of wives,
“ I’ll look for joy :—But see, the neighbours all
“ Come posting on to share the festival ;
“ And I’m determin’d, while the sun’s so bright,
“ That this shall be a wedding-day outright :
“ How cheerly sound the bells ! my charmer, come,
“ Partake their joy, and know yourself at home.

- “ Sit down, good JOHN ;”—“ I will,” the old man cried,
“ And let me drink to you, Sir, and the bride ;
“ My blessing on you : I am lame and old,
“ I can’t make speeches, and I won’t be bold ;
“ But from my soul I wish and wish again,
“ *That brave good gentlemen would not disdain*
“ *The poor, because they’re poor* : for, if they live
“ Midst crimes that parents *never can* forgive,
“ If, like the forest beast, they wander wild,
“ To rob a father, or to crush a child,
“ Nature *will* speak, ay, just as Nature feels,
“ And’wish—a GILBERT MELDRUM at their heels.”

SHOOTER'S HILL.

HEALTH ! I seek thee ;—dost thou love
The mountain top or quiet vale,
Or deign o'er humbler hills to rove
On show'ry June's dark south-west gale ?
If so, I'll meet all blasts that blow,
With silent step, but not forlorn ;
Though, goddess, at thy shrine I bow,
And woo thee each returning morn.

I seek thee ^Dwhere, with all his might,
The joyous bird his rapture tells,
Amidst the half excluded light,
That gilds the fox-glove's pendant bells ;
Where cheerly up this bold hill's side
The deepning groves triumphant climb :
In groves Delight and Peace abide,
And Wisdom marks the lapse of time.

To hide me from the public eye,
To keep the throne of Reason clear,
Amidst fresh air to breathe or die,
I took my staff and wander'd here.
Suppressing every sigh that heaves,
And coveting nō wealth but thee,
I nestle in the honied leaves,
And hug my stolen liberty.

O'er eastward uplands, gay or rude,
Along to Erith's ivied spire,
I start, with strength and hope renew'd,
And cherish life's rekindling fire.
Now measure vales with straining eyes,
Now trace the churchyard's humble names ;
Or, climb brown heaths, abrupt that rise,
And overlook the winding Thames.

I love to mark the flow'ret's eye,
To rest where pebbles form my bed,
Where shapes and colours scatter'd lie,
In varying millions round my head.
The soul rejoices when alone,
And feels her glorious empire free ;
Sees God in every shining stone,
And revels in variety.

Ah me ! perhaps within my sight,
Deep in the smiling dales below,
Gigantic talents, Heav'n's pure light,
And all the rays of genius glow
In some lone soul, whom no one sees
With *power* and *will* to say " Arise,"
Or chase away the slow disease,
And Want's foul picture from his eyes.

A. worthier man by far than I,
With more 'of industry and fire,
Shall see fair Virtue's meed pass by,
Without one spark of fame expire !
'Bleed not my heart, it will be so,
The throb of care was thine full long ;
Rise, like the Psalmist from his woe,
And pour abroad the joyful song.

Sweet Health, I seek thee ! hither bring
Thy balm that softens human ills ;
Come, on the long-drawn clouds that fling
Their shadows o'er the Surrey Hills.
Yon green-topt hills, and far away
Where late as now I freedom stole,
And spent one dear delicious day
On thy wild banks, romantic *Mole*.

Ay, there's the scene ! * beyond the sweep
Of London's congregated cloud,
The dark-brow'd wood, the headlong steep,
And valley-paths without a crowd !
Here, Thames, I watch thy flowing tides,
Thy thousand sails am proud to see ;
For where the *Mole* all silent glides
Dwells Peace—and Peace is wealth to me !

* Box Hill, and the beautiful neighbourhood of Dorking, in Surrey.

SHOOTER'S HILL.

Of Cambrian mountains still I dream,
And mouldering vestiges of war ;
By time-worn cliff or classic stream
Would rove,—but Prudence holds a bar.
Come then, O Health ! I'll strive to bound
My wishes to this airy stand ;
'Tis not for *me* to trace around
The wonders of my native land.

Yet, the loud torrent's dark retreat,
Yet Grampian hills shall Fancy give,
And, tow'ring in her giddy seat,
Amidst her own creation live,—
Live, if thou'lt urge my climbing feet,
Give strength of nerve and vigorous breath,
If not, with dauntless soul I meet
The deep solemnity of death.

This far-seen monumental tower
Records th' achievements of the brave,
And Angria's subjugated power,
Who plunder'd on the eastern wave.
I would not that such turrets rise
To point out where my bones are laid ;
Save that some wand'ring bard might prize
The comforts of its broad cool shade.

O Vanity ! since thou'rt decreed
Companion of our lives to be,
I'll seek the moral songster's meed,
An earthly immortality ;
Most vain !—O let me, from the past
Rememb'ring what to man is giv'n,
Lay Virtue's broad foundations fast,
Whose glorious turrets reach' to Heav'n.

A VISIT TO RANELAGH.

To RANELAGH, once in my life,
' By good-natur'd force I was driv'n ;
The nations had ceas'd their long strife,
And PEACE * beam'd her radiance from Heav'n.
' What wonders were there to be found
That a clown might enjoy or disdain !
First we trac'd the gay ring all around,
Ay—and then ' we went round it again.

* A grand Fête, in honour of the Peace of 1802.

A thousand feet rustled on mats,
A carpet that once had been green ;
Men bow'd with their outlandish hats,
With corners so fearfully keen !
Fair maids, who at home in their haste
Had left all clothing else but a train,
Swept the floor clean, as slowly they pac'd,
And then—walk'd round and swept it again.

The music was truly enchanting !
Right glad was I when I came near it ;
But in fashion I found I was wanting :—
'Twas the fashion to walk and not hear it !
A fine youth, as beauty beset him,
Look'd smilingly round on the train ;
“ The king's nephew,” they cried, as they met him ;
Then—we went round and met him again.

Huge paintings of Heroes and Peace
Seem'd to smile at the sound of the fiddle,
Proud to fill up each tall shining space
Round the lantern* that stood in the middle :
And GEORGE'S head too ; Heav'n screen him !
May he finish in peace his long reign !
And what did we when we had seen him ?
Why—went round and saw him again.

A bell rang, announcing new pleasures,
A crowd in an instant prest hard,
Feathers nodded, perfumes shed their treasures,
Round a door that led into the yard.
'Twas peopled all o'er in a minute,
As a white flock would cover a plain !
We had seen every soul that was in it,
Then we went round and saw them again.

The intervals between the pillars in the centre of the Rotunda were

But now came a scene worth the showing,
The fireworks ! midst laughs and huzzas,
With explosions the sky was all glowing,
Then down stream'd a million of stars :
With a rush the bright rockets ascended,
Wheels spurted blue fires like a rain ;
We turn'd with regret when 'twas ended,
Then—star'd at each other again.

There thousands of gay lamps aspir'd
To the tops of the trees and beyond ;
And, what was most hugely admir'd,
They look'd all up-side-down in a pond !
The blaze scarce an eagle could bear ;
And an owl had most surely been slain ;
We return'd to the circle, and there ——
And there we went round it again.

'Tis not wisdom to love without reason,
Or to censure without knowing why :
I had witness'd no crime, nor no treason,
“ O life ! 'tis thy picture,” said I.
'Tis just thus we saunter along ;
Months and years bring their pleasures or pain ;
We sigh midst the *right* and the *wrong* ;
—And then *we go round them again !*

LOVE OF THE COUNTRY.

WRITTEN AT CLARE HALL, HERTS.

WELCOME Silence ! welcome Peace !

O most welcome, holy shade !

Thus I prove, as years increase,

My heart and soul for quiet made.

Thus I fix my firm belief

While rapture's gushing tears descend,

That ev'ry flow'r and ev'ry leaf

Is moral Truth's unerring friend.

I would not for a world of gold
 That Nature's lovely face should tire ;
 Fountain of blessings yet untold ;
 Pure source of intellectual fire !
 Fancy's fair buds, the germs of song,
 Unquicken'd midst the world's rude strife,
 Shall sweet retirement render strong,
 And morning silence bring to life.

Then tell me not that I shall grow
 Forlorn, that fields and woods will cloy ;
 From Nature and her changes flow
 An everlasting tide of joy.
 I grant that summer heats will burn,
 That keen will come the frosty night ;
 But both shall please ; and each in turn
 Yield Reason's most supreme delight.

Build me a shrine, and I could kneel
 To Rural Gods, or prostrate fall ;
 Did I not see, did I not feel,
 That one GREAT SPIRIT governs all.
 O Heav'n, permit that I may lie
 Where o'er my corse green branches wave ;
 And those who from life's tumult fly
 With kindred feelings press my grave.

MARY'S EVENING SIGH.

How bright 'with pearl the western sky!

How glorious far and wide,

Yon lines of golden clouds that lie

So 'peaceful side by side!

Their deep'ning tints, the arch' of light,

All eyes with rapture see;

E'en while I sigh I bless the sight

That lures my love' from me.

Green hill, that shad'st the valley here,

Thou bear'st upon thy brow

The only wealth to Mary dear,

And all she'll ever know.

There, in the crimson light I see,

Above thy summit rise,

My Edward's form, he looks to me

A statue in the skies.

Descend, my love, the hour is come,

Why linger on the hill?

The sun hath left my quiet home,

But thou can'st see him still;

Yet why a lonely wanderer stray,

Alone the joy pursue?

The glories of the closing day

Can charm thy Mary too.

Dear Edward, when we stroll'd along
 Beneath the waving corn,
And both confess'd the power of song,
 And bless'd the dewy morn ;
Your eye o'erflow'd, " How sweet," you cried,
 (My presence then could move)
" How sweet, with Mary by my side,
 " To gaze and talk of love !"

Thou art not false ! that cannot be ;
 Yet I my rivals deem
Each woodland charm, the moss, the tree,
 The silence, and the stream ;
Whate'er my love, detains thee now,
 I'll yet forgive thy stay ;
But with to-morrow's dawn come thou,
 We'll brush the 'dews away.

BARNHAM WATER.

FRESH from the Hall of Bounty sprung,
With glowing heart and ardent eye,
With song and rhyme upon my tongue,
And fairy visions dancing by,
The mid-day sun in all his pow'r
The backward valley painted gay;
Mine was a road without a flow'r,
Where one small streamlet cross'd the way.

What was it rous'd my soul to love?
What made the simple brook so dear?
It glided like the weary dove,
And never brook seem'd half so clear.
Cool pass'd the current o'er my feet,
Its shelving bank for rest was made,
But every charm was incomplete,
For Barnham Water wants a shade.

There, faint beneath the fervid sun,
I gaz'd in ruminating mood;
For who can see the current run
And snatch no feast of mental food?
"Keep pure thy soul," it seem'd to say,
"Keep that fair path by wisdom trod,
"That thou may'st hope to wind thy way,
"To fame worth boasting, and to God."

Long and delightful was the dream,
A waking dream that Fancy yields,
Till with regret I left the stream,
And plung'd across the barren fields ;
To where of old rich abbeys smil'd
In all the pomp of gothic taste
By fond tradition proudly styl'd,
The mighty "City in the East."

Near, on a slope of burning sand,
The shepherd boys had met to play,
To hold the plains at their command,
And mark the trav'ller's leafless way.
The trav'ller with a cheerful look
Would every pining thought forbear,
If boughs but shelter'd Barnham brook
He'd stop and leave his blessing there.

The Danish mounds of partial green,
 Still, as each mouldering tower decays,
 Far o'er the bleak unwooded scene
 Proclaim their wond'rous length of days.
 My burning feet, my aching sight,
 Demanded rest,—why did I weep?
 The moon arose, and such a night!
 Good Heav'n! it was a sin to sleep.

•All rushing came thy hallow'd sighs,
 Sweet Melancholy, from my breast;
 “ ’Tis here that eastern greatness lies,
 “ That Might, Renown, and Wisdom rest!
 “ Here funeral rites the priesthood gave
 “ To chiefs who sway'd prodigious powers,
 “ The Bigods and the Mowbrays brave,
 “ From Framlingham's imperial towers.”

Full of the mighty deeds of yore,
I bade good night the trembling beam ;
Fancy e'en heard the battle's roar,
Of what but slaughter could I dream ?
Bless'd be that night, that trembling beam,
Peaceful excursions Fancy made ;
All night I heard the bubbling stream,
Yet, Barnham Water wants a shade.

Whatever hurts my country's fame,
When wits and mountaineers deride,
To me grows serious, for I name
My native plains and streams with pride.
No mountain charms have I to sing,
No loftier minstrel's rights invade ;
From trifles oft *my* raptures spring ;
—Sweet Barnham Water wants a shade.



THE WOODLAND HALLÓ.

(PERHAPS) ADAPTED FOR MUSIC.

IN our cottage, that peeps from the skirts of the wood,

I am mistress, no mother have I ;

Yet blithe are my days, for my father is good,

And kind is my lover hard by ;

They both work together beneath the green shade,
Both woodmen, my father and Joe :
Where I 've listen'd whole hours to the echo that made
So much of a laugh or—Halló.

From my basket at noon they expect their supply,
And with joy from my threshold I spring ;
For the woodlands I love, and the oaks waving high,
And Echo that sings as I sing.
Though deep shades delight me, yet love is my food,
As I call the dear name of my Joe ;
His musical shout is the pride of the wood,
And my heart leaps to hear the—Halló,

Simple flowers of the grove, little birds live at ease
I wish not to wander from you ;
I'll still dwell beneath the deep roar of your trees,
For I know that my Joe will be true.

The trill of the robin, the coo of the dove,
Are charms that I'll never forego ;
But resting through life on the bosom of love,
Will remember the Woodland Halló.

THE END.

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